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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

ANNUAL REPORT

4 MAY 1995 - 8 MAY 1996

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 1996

Supplement No. 15

UNITED NATIONS

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAF-SAP	African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation
AAPSO	Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization
AATPO	Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations
ACARTSOD	African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development
ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group
ADB	African Development Bank
AEC	African Economic Community
AFREXIM	African Export-Import Bank
AFWIC	African Women in Crisis Umbrella (of the United Nations Development Fund for Women)
IHTTR	African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research
AISI	African Information Society Initiative
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
AOCRS	African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing
APPER	Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery
ARCC	Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development
ARCEDEM	African Regional Centre for Engineering, Design and Manufacturing
ARCT	African Regional Centre for Technology
ARSO	African Regional Organization for Standardization
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CAFRAD	African Centre for Administrative Training and Research for Development
CAMRDC	Central African Mineral Resources Development Centre
CAMSDE	Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment
CASD	Committee on African Stastical Development
CEAO	West African Economic Community
CEPGL	Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPC	Committee for Programme Co-ordination
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DPCSD	Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECA-MRAG	Multidisciplinary Regional Advisory Group
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECDC	Economic cooperation among developing countries
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EDI	Economic Development Institute of the World Bank
ESAMI	Eastern and Southern African Management Institute
ESAMRDC	Eastern and Southern African Mineral Resources Development Centre
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HEDA	Home and Environment Development Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IDDA	Industrial Development Decade for Africa
IDEP	African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
IDRC	International Development Research Centre of Canada
IFORD	Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques
IGADD	Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development
IGOs	Intergovernmental organizations
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
KBO	Kagera Basin Organization
LAS	League of Arab States
LCBC	Lake Chad Basin Commission
LDCs	Least developed countries
MULPOC	Multinational Programming and Operational Centre
NASD	Needs Assessment Exercise and Strategy Development
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NICI	National Information and Communication Infrastructure

OATUU	Organization of African Trade Union Unity
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PADIS	Pan-African Development Information System
RASCOM	Regional African Satellite Communications System
RBA	Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP)
RBASEP	Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes
RCNYO	Regional Commissions New York Office
RCSSMRS	Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing
RECTAS	Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys
RIPS	Regional Institute for Population Studies
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAERR	Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Rehabilitation and Reconstruction
SAPs	Structural adjustment programmes
SNPA	Substantial New Programme of Action
SSTAP	Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Programme
TCDC	Technical cooperation among developing countries
TEPCOW	Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole
UDEAC	Central African Customs and Economic Union
UNAFRI	United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCTC	United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-IATF	United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UN-NADAF	United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
UN-PAAERD	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development

UNTACDA	United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa
UNTFAD	United Nations Trust Fund for African Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASME	World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

1. The present annual report of the Economic Commission for Africa covers the period 4 May 1995 to 8 May 1996. It has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Commission's terms of reference and was adopted by the Commission on 8 May 1996.

CHAPTER I

I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

Economic Commission for Africa

A. *Matters calling for action by the Council*

2. At the thirty-first session of the Commission/twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6 to 8 May 1996, the Conference of Ministers adopted the following draft resolution calling for action by the Council:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

809 (XXXI). *New directions for the Economic Commission for Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the terms of reference of the Commission as adopted by Economic and Social Council resolution 671A(XXV) of 29 April 1958 and amended by its resolutions 974 D.I(XXXVI) of 5 July 1963, 1343 (XLV) of 18 July 1968 and 1978/68 of 4 August 1978,

Recalling further the various resolutions that have implications on the mandate and operations of the Commission including, in particular, General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, General Assembly resolutions 33/202 of 29 January 1979 and 44/211 of 21 December 1989,

Noting with appreciation the endorsement by the Economic and Social Council of Commission resolution 718 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991 on the revitalization of the mandate and operational framework of the regional economic commissions as well as Commission resolution 726 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992 on strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa to face Africa's development challenges in the 1990s and 779 (XXIX) of 4 May 1994 on strengthening the operational capacity of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions 45/177 of 19 December 1990, 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and those located in developing countries strengthened in the context of the overall objectives of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization process,

Having examined in-depth the documents entitled "Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa"[1] and the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001,[2]

1. Expresses its appreciation for the process of reform and renewal of the Commission initiated by the Executive Secretary;

2. Endorses the new orientations of the Commission as outlined in the Strategic Directions document;

3. Endorses further the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001 bearing in mind that in its implementation due emphasis will be given to the need for greater selectivity and impact;

4. Encourages the Executive Secretary to continue to strengthen the process of renewal and reform of the Commission in consultation with member States;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary in close collaboration with the Bureau of the Commission to revise the 1996-1997 work programme which revision has become necessary to reflect the new orientation of the Commission's work and to ensure a smooth transition in 1997 to the next Medium-term Plan. The revision must be within resources already approved for the Economic Commission for Africa by the General Assembly and must pay due regard to the efficiency measures required to implement the relevant decisions of the General Assembly regarding the 1996-1997 budget;

6. Appeals to the Secretary-General to request the General Assembly to consider the revised work programme in conjunction with its review of the Medium-term Plan 1998-2001.

B. *Matters brought to the attention of the Council*

3. The Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning also adopted the resolutions and decisions summarized below:

810 (XXXI). *Strengthening of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres*

The Conference took note of the new strategic vision of the Commission as outlined in the document "Serving Africa better: Strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa" as well as its resolution 702 (XXV) of 19 May 1990 on the transformation and strengthening of the Centres to enable them to play an effective role as catalysts for subregional economic integration. It requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to take necessary steps to strengthen the Centres to ensure that they play their role more efficiently as centres of excellence.

811 (XXXI). *The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa*

As a follow-up to General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991 on the United nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) in the 1990s and the Cairo Agenda for Action: Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development, and having examined in-depth the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, the Conference considered the report on "United Nations System-wide Initiative on Africa". The Conference adopted the report and noted with satisfaction that the priorities of the Special Initiative were in consonance with those enunciated in the Cairo Agenda for Action and UN-NADAF. It further noted that the Initiative represented a set of concrete and coordinated actions aimed at maximizing support for Africa's development within the framework of UN-NADAF. It endorsed the Initiative and called upon the international community, particularly the United Nations system to extend effective support to African countries to enable them to fully realize the objectives and targets of the Initiative. It requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to coordinate the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the priorities and activities of the Initiative and UN-NADAF and submit such report regularly to the Conference of Ministers.

812 (XXXI). *Implementation of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI)*

As a follow-up to resolution 795 (XXX) of 3 May 1995 on building Africa's information highway, the Conference considered the report "Exploiting information technology to accelerate socio-economic development in Africa: An action plan". It adopted the plan of action proposed in the report and called upon the Economic Commission for Africa, in consultation with member States, along with the major international organizations and bilateral partners to incorporate the objectives of the African Information Society and to consider utilizing it as a guiding framework.

813 (XXXI). *Amendment to resolution 757 (XXVIII) on the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission related to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment*

The Conference took note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the Commission on the consultations between the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the secretariats of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Environment Programme with the Economic Commission for Africa concerning the scope of activities of AMCEN and the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment (CAMSDE).

The Conference endorsed the proposal to reconsider its resolution 757 (XXVIII) of 4 May

1993 on "Restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission" which suppressed the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment. The Conference introduced amendments to the last paragraph of section B.2 to rectify the error in the suppression of AMCEN as follows: "This Conference assumes the functions of the Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment which is hereby abolished". It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to make recommendations to the regular session of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning in 1998 for final decision on the status of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment vis-à-vis the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

814 (XXXI). *Implementation of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1993-2002)*

The Conference, in reaffirming the primary responsibilities of African countries in the implementation of the second Industrial Development Decade programme, called upon the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to continue to undertake concrete follow-up actions for the promotion of the Decade programme. It appealed to member States to take measures to enhance the full implementation of the programme. It also appealed to international development partners to consider favourably allocation of substantial resources for the implementation of the programme.

815 (XXXI). *Mobilization of resources for industrialization in Africa*

The Conference recalled General Assembly resolution 47/177 of 22 December 1992 adopting the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa; resolution GC5/Res.20 and the Yaounde Declaration adopted by the fifth session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the second Ministerial Symposium on Industrialization of Least Developed Countries; and also resolution 2 (XI) adopted at the eleventh meeting the Conference of African Ministers of Industry on the development of the private sector for the accelerated implementation of the programme for the second Decade and beyond. It took note of document CAMI.12/8/ICE/1995/8 entitled "Mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa" and also document CAMI.12/9/ICE/1995/9 entitled "Development of human resources for industrialization in Africa". The Conference called upon member States to create and maintain an enabling environment for private sector development and the growth of private capital inflows as well as to provide improved infrastructural and human resources capacities.

The Conference requested international organizations, including the World Bank and regional organizations, to continue to support African countries with the technical and financial assistance for the development of the private sector and promotion of private investment. It called upon African member States and regional/-subregional organizations to pay particular attention to the development of industrial skills and technological and entrepreneurial capabilities in national human resources development programmes and to ensure that adequate resources are provided in national budgets as well as support from multilateral and bilateral funding agencies in this regard. The Conference also called upon the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and other international organizations to continue to help African countries in their research/development and training activities by providing technical and financial assistance to subregional and regional institutions. It also requested the secretariats of the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Organization of African Unity to take necessary measures for establishing an information network on African industrial training institutions. It also urged the member States to institute initiatives that will curb Africa's brain drain and to use and manage national skills rationally, and increase the participation of women in industrial development. The Conference also requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to undertake follow-up actions for the mobilization of resources at national, subregional and regional levels for industrialization in Africa and jointly submit a biennial report on the matter to the Conference of African Ministers of Industry.

816 (XXXI). *Enhancement of women's contribution to the implementation of the programme of the second United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1993-2002)*

Recognizing the strategic role that women can play in the achievement of the Decade objectives, the Conference called upon African countries to enhance the involvement of women in the development of Africa, including the private sector and in particular industrial activities. It also called upon international organizations to provide support for the promotion of women's participation in industrial activities.

817 (XXXI). *African Regional Conference on Science and Technology*

The Conference noted the importance of science and technology in stimulating economic growth in African countries. In this regard, the Conference urged member States to renew science and technology policies and machinery and translate these into appropriate legislation for their effective application; put in place incentives to foster progress in science and technological innovation; create a strong governmental machinery for designing and managing imported technology and for the effective utilization of such imported technology. It further urged member States to put in place an enabling environment for capacity building for effectively utilizing international technologies; and to take steps to implement the protocol on science and technology of the African Economic Community. It called upon the organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their assistance to African countries and organizations in promoting the development of science and technology in the continent.

818 (XXXI). *Promotion of mineral resources development and utilization in Africa*

The Conference recognized the poor state of development of the African minerals processing industries, the need to strengthen African countries' capabilities and capacity to develop fully their mineral resources and the important role of the private sector in this regard. It requested the Economic Commission for Africa to carry out studies on selected minerals with a view to providing information and data for policy formulation and strategy development. It also recommended that African countries should enhance the cooperation and integration in mineral resources development.

819 (XXXI). *Promotion of energy resources development and utilization in Africa*

Recognizing the importance of energy development in the achievement of sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation, the Conference urged member States to formulate policies and strategies that would enhance greater contribution of energy to socio-economic development. It further urged African States to establish appropriate legal, fiscal and financial incentives, including physical infrastructure to facilitate access to energy, including new and renewable sources of energy, particularly by low-income consumers to meet their energy needs. It also requested member States to initiate concrete actions by creating the necessary conducive and enabling environment for the optimal operation of the energy sector. It further urged African countries to strengthen cooperation and integration through the exchange of information and experiences. In this regard, it called upon the Economic Commission for Africa and other African organizations to establish energy networks for the exchange of information on development and utilization of energy resources in general and new and renewable sources of energy resources in particular.

820 (XXXI). *Organization of a meeting on economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries*

The importance of South-South cooperation to the development of the region, in particular its contribution to production and trade was underscored. In this respect, the Conference welcomed the proposal to organize a meeting bringing together United Nations regional commissions and relevant specialized agencies, financial institutions and other development partners. It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to proceed with the arrangements for the conference and called upon member States to participate fully in the proposed conference.

821 (XXXI). *Eight-year intra-African trade development action plan*

As a follow-up to the extraordinary session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade, which met in December 1990 and adopted the Strategies for the revitalization and growth of Africa's trade in the 1990s and beyond, the Conference endorsed the Plan of Action for the development of intra-African trade as proposed by the Economic Commission for Africa. The Conference urged member States to support fully and implement the eight-year Plan of Action for the development of intra-African trade. It called upon regional and international organizations to cooperate and coordinate efforts in the implementation of the Plan of Action; and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies to support the Plan of Action and provide resources for the funding of related programmes.

822 (XXXI). *Implementation of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community: Strengthening regional economic communities; rationalization and harmonization of the activities of regional and subregional communities*

Considering the entry into force on 12 May 1994 of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and the role of the regional and subregional economic communities to the implementation of the provision of the Abuja Treaty, the Commission recommended the strengthening of the economic communities, including the rationalization and harmonization of their activities for enhanced impact. It urged member States that have not ratified the Abuja Treaty to do so and requested member States, regional and subregional communities to institute a programme for the rationalization and harmonization of sectoral integration policies, including in particular community trade policies through the unification of trade liberalization instruments. It also proposed the adoption of appropriate measures for enhancing the region's competitiveness in trade, promote the participation of the private sector in the integration process and design a self-financing mechanism for financing the integration process. It requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to assist in the implementation of the programme for the rationalization and design of the self-financing mechanism and for which it

appealed to partners, including the United Nations Development Programme and funding agencies to contribute to the financing activities on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty.

823 (XXXI). *Development of tourism in Africa*

In view of the growing importance of tourism in socio-economic and cultural development in particular the regional integration process, the Conference adopted a number of arrangements to facilitate the rationalization and effective utilization of tourism resources in Africa at the subregional and regional levels. It also proposed necessary follow-up mechanisms in the implementation of programmes related to arrangements at subregional and regional levels.

824 (XXXI). *Follow-up to Dakar and Beijing Conferences: Implementation of the Global and Regional Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women*

Recalling Commission resolution 802 (XXX) of 3 May 1995 concerning the African Platform for Action and the African Common Position for the Advancement of Women endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, the Conference urged African regional organizations to play a strong coordinating and catalytic role in the implementation of the Global and Regional Platforms for Action at the regional and subregional levels. It requested the Economic Commission for Africa to establish a data bank on national experiences on women. It also requested member States to mainstream gender in all sectors of national programmes; and to ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into the "African Information Society Initiative" to respond to the needs of both women and men appropriately and equitably.

825 (XXXI). *Decoration of the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa*

Noting with satisfaction the completion of the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa and expressing its desire that the Centre's decor reflect the rich cultural heritage of Africa, the Conference appealed to member States to support the decoration project by contributing generously towards the decoration of the Centre.

DEC.1 (XXXI). *Decision on the replacement of members of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) Governing Council*

The Conference of Ministers decides that effective 1 January 1997, the composition of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Planning and Development shall be as follows:

(a) North African subregion: the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia;

(b) West African subregion: Guinea, Nigeria and Togo;

(c) Central African subregion: the Central African Republic, the Congo and Rwanda;

(d) Eastern and Southern African subregion: Ethiopia, Malawi and Swaziland.

DEC.2 (XXXI). *Decision on sharpening the objectives and long-term goal of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development*

The Conference of Ministers adopted the decision of the Board of Governors of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development at its meeting held in Niamey, the Niger, from the 27 to 29 March 1996. It decided to refocus the medium-term objectives and long-term goal of the Centre's programme to make it better respond to the emerging socio-economic needs of member States. It also decided to establish a Scientific Advisory Committee of the Board of Governors with the responsibilities of ensuring relevance of programmes and products and continuous review of the objectives of the Centre in the light of emerging economic and scientific developments. It further decided on the composition, the duration and membership of the Scientific Advisory Committee. The Conference also endorsed the decisions relating to the membership of the Board of Governors and the scale of contribution to the recurrent budget of the Centre. It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in close collaboration with the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Director General of the Centre, to review the staff rules of the Centre.

DEC.3 (XXXI). *Revitalization and strengthening of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women (ARCC)*

The Conference endorsed the modifications in the composition of the membership of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women as decided in the meeting of ARCC, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 24 to 26 April 1996.

1. E/ECA/CM.22/2.

2. E/ECA/CM.22/3.

CHAPTER II

WORK OF THE COMMISSION DURING THE PERIOD 4 MAY 1995 TO 8 MAY 1996

A. *Activities of subsidiary organs*

4. During the period under review, the secretariat prepared for and serviced the meetings of various intergovernmental bodies of the Commission. The list of these meetings is given in annex II of this report.

B. *Other activities*

5. ECA undertook several studies and completed work on development of policy frameworks on a variety of economic and social issues in Africa's development. The studies focused, for example, on such issues as improving financing and operations of transport and communications; the enhancement of cooperation and integration in tourism; development of subregional energy supply; the use of effective marketing strategies for the enhancement of minerals utilization, poverty reduction through improved food security; problems and prospects for large-scale irrigation in Africa; the integration of environmental considerations into agricultural planning and policy strategies; enhancement of public sector performance especially in the areas of fiscal policies; improving public expenditure targeting and allocation for rural development; urban environment and health institutions; modalities for promoting the financing of small and cottage industries in Africa; and legal procedures and modalities for negotiation and investment in African multinational projects and enterprises.

6. A particularly important activity related to the elaboration of the action plan for utilizing information technology to accelerate socio-economic development, known as the African Information Society Initiative (AISI). The action plan was the culmination of the efforts of a High-level Working Group on information and communication technologies for Africa which was established by the Executive Secretary at the request of the ECA Conference of Ministers for Economic and Social Development and Planning at its 1995 session. The action plan details policy measures and actions to be adopted by member States to facilitate and enhance their integration into the global information system. In this regard, the AISI calls for the formulation of a national information and communication infrastructure (NICI) plan in every African country or subregion in which such information infrastructure does not yet exist.

7. Another major effort pertaining to the development of a policy framework concerned the finalization of the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa. Work on the Framework Agenda has been in progress for two years. The process leading to the finalization of the document has included the preparation of country case studies to identify current practices and policies in selected priority areas, and consultation with relevant United Nations agencies and African experts on their experiences in assisting African countries to build their capacities. This was followed by a panel discussion on the Framework Agenda during the seventeenth session of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole as part of the events of the thirty-first session of the Commission.

8. ECA continued its support for follow-up activities on regional programmes, in particular the second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA II) and the United Nations Second Industrial Development Decade in Africa (IDDA II), aimed at developing or enhancing capacities of member States for the effective implementation of these programmes. In this regard, particular emphasis was given to the documentation and exchange of information on methodologies adopted in addressing specific issues pertaining to these programmes. Most notable among these activities were the organization of an ad hoc expert group meeting on air transport policy and integration in Africa drawing on the experience of best practise cases; the preparation and presentation of a paper on liberalization policy on the telecommunication industry at the twenty-eighth annual Regional Telecommunications Conference; drawing up a policy framework for improving the management and financing of the road sector for the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the organization of an ad hoc expert meeting to review industrial development promotion in the region with a view to making proposals on measures to develop, promote and consolidate privatization of industrial enterprises; the organization of an ad hoc expert meeting to review the current development of irrigation

equipment manufacturing industry with the aim of formulating and recommending policies for the integrated production of irrigation equipment and accessories.

9. ECA participated in the substantive organization and servicing of the Regional Ministerial meeting for Africa preparatory to the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II). At this meeting, the Johannesburg Declaration on the African Common Position for HABITAT II was adopted, to express the need for adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development especially for the urban poor and other vulnerable groups, in the African region. ECA also prepared the regional report on the State of Human Settlements in Africa 1996 and the Continental Shelter Atlas with Shelter Afrique.

10. The ECA Multidisciplinary Regional Advisory Group (MRAG) continued to be the main vehicle for providing technical assistance support and advisory services to member States and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). Technical advisory services were provided by the ECA-MRAG on a variety of development issues. The services covered such areas as inland water transport; subregional cooperation for lake basin development; implementation of the African Platform for Action on women; formulation of development priorities, programmes and projects; economic cooperation and integration; human resources development and utilization, energy development; criminal justices and crime prevention; mineral resources and development; agricultural development; rural development; industrial development; and science and technology development.

11. During the year, ECA continued its collaboration with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in implementing the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. Efforts in this regard were concentrated on the preparation of the various protocols related to the Treaty.

12. The process of renewal of the Commission was intensified in the third quarter of 1995. The renewal is guided by three principles, namely excellence, greater cost-effectiveness and effective partnerships. The reform process has been marked by broad consultations. The first stage of the consultations was with all staff members of the Commission who were given an opportunity to offer ideas and suggestions for improving the products and processes of the Commission. This was followed, in a second stage, by a consultative meeting held in January 1996 with 40 high-level African experts drawn from government, the private sector, African regional and subregional IGOs, academia and civil society as well as the Bureau of the Commission. The third stage of the consultative process involved a meeting in early April 1996 with ECA's principal partners - representatives of the agencies of the United Nations system, bilateral donors from both developed and developing countries and some international foundations. Simultaneously, major reviews of ECA's programming and budgeting systems, human resources management, skills mix of the professional staff and communication strategy were undertaken.

13. The programme of reforms and renewal of ECA featured prominently at the thirty-first session of the Commission held from 30 April - 8 May 1996 under the theme "Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa". The session had in-depth discussion on the Commission's new orientation document, entitled "Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa". The session endorsed ECA's new programme orientation, articulated in that document, which would concentrate on five major themes, namely facilitating economic and social policy analysis; ensuring food security and sustainable development; strengthening development management; harnessing information for development; and promoting regional cooperation and integration as well as two cross-cutting issues of gender and capacity building.

14. Two special events were organized to coincide with the thirty-first session of the Commission. One was a panel discussion on the Framework Agenda on building and utilizing critical capacities in Africa. The panel discussion on the Framework Agenda completed the circle of consultations on that important policy framework, work on which had been in progress for the past two years. The final document, which will be released later this year, will serve as a reference for strategies for building capacities in Africa. The second event at the annual session of the Commission was a high-level Forum on public expenditure and the poor in Africa, which was held during the Ministerial session.

15. Pursuant to the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly on follow-up

to global conferences, ECA has promoted collaboration with other United Nations agencies and regional IGOs and monitored progress in follow-up to the conferences, including providing technical assistance to member States for implementation of the programmes of action adopted at these conferences. Thus, as a contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD.94), ECA prepared studies related to its implementation; convened an Experts/NGOs Workshop on the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and ICPD.94; participated in the joint ECA/OAU/ADB missions of the African Population Commission to assess country experiences of some member States, namely Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe on the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action; and convened a Senior Policy Seminar on the social impact of HIV/AIDs in households and family in Africa, held in Addis Ababa from 2 to 4 October 1995.

16. The Experts/NGOs Workshop was organized, in June 1995, at the behest of the intergovernmental follow-up Committee on the implementation of ICPD established by the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning. The workshop was a collaborative effort with OAU, ADB, the Governments of France and the Netherlands, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The workshop examined the problems encountered in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the Dakar/Ngor Declaration - the African regional platform on population - and made several recommendations for accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action. These included creating awareness at grass-roots levels; providing an enabling environment for the formulation and implementation of population and development policies; involving people at all levels of implementation; establishing mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of population and development policies; allocating more resources for population programmes; and improving the status and role of women.

17. As regards follow-up to the fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China, in September 1995, ECA organized a meeting of the Bureau of the fifth Regional Conference on Women which prepared the African regional Platform for Action for the Beijing Conference. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss a framework for accelerating the implementation of the Global and Regional Platforms for Action in Africa. The framework articulates measures for sensitization and social mobilization around critical areas of concern; elaboration of plans of action to ensure translation of commitments into concrete actions; adoption of an adequate strategy for mobilization of resources and for harmonization as well as coordination of post-Beijing activities. The framework will be disseminated to all national machineries, relevant ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), training and research institutions for their use in the implementation process.

18. The framework was subsequently endorsed by the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the integration of women in development (ARCC) at its seventeenth meeting held in Addis Ababa from 24 to 26 April 1996. ARCC is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commission which provides policy guidance on women issues in the region. To enhance the effectiveness of ARCC as a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the Platforms for Action in Africa, ARCC members requested ECA to undertake an in-depth evaluation of its role and function. It also decided to include the Chairperson of the Regional Conference on Women in the Bureau of ARCC and to expand its membership from 15 to 19 countries.

19. ECA undertook several advisory missions on gender within the context of the Platform for Action: two to member States, one to the Commonwealth Secretariat and two others to NGOs dealing with gender and development. Through its advisory services, ECA seeks to foster integration of a gender perspective into policies, plans and programmes of member States and advocacy groups in the various countries of the region.

20. ECA is devoting much effort to the economic empowerment of women - a major element of the Regional and Global Platforms for Action. Thus, it is co-organizing the first global women entrepreneurs' trade fair and investment forum to be held in Accra, Ghana from 26 June to 3 July 1996. The trade fair offers women entrepreneurs opportunities for networking, skill development, information sharing, market expansion and forging of partnerships for expanded trade and investment.

21. To expand its activities in support of women, ECA has embarked on active resource mobilization efforts for the implementation of the various aspects of the Platforms for Action. To date, a

project on a leadership fund for African women has been formulated and some funds have already been pledged or committed by several donors. The leadership fund is intended to implement activities related to leadership promotion in public decision-making, economic empowerment and in the promotion of women's legal and human rights.

22. The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development, in conjunction with its follow-up Ministerial Committee of Fifteen, is the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission for monitoring the implementation in Africa of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. By providing a forum for sharing experiences on policies and practices on social development in various African countries, this Ministerial Conference and its follow-up Committee have a catalytic role to play in implementing the various recommendations of the World Summit. The Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Fifteen held its first meeting in Addis Ababa from 13 to 16 November 1995 at which several member States presented country reports on the state of human development in their countries.

23. ECA's Human Development in Africa report is the main vehicle for reporting on the trends and developments relating to social and human development in Africa. During its meeting, the follow-up Committee of Fifteen held extensive discussions on the Human Development in Africa report 1995. Consequently, it agreed that the next issue of the report should include measurable indicators to assess the progress made in advancing social development at the country level. The Human Development in Africa report serves as a tool for inter-agency monitoring at the regional level in so far as several agencies make valuable contributions to its preparation.

24. ECA is organizing an international conference on the theme "Reviving private investments in Africa: Partnerships for growth and development" to be held in Accra, from 24 to 27 July 1996. The Conference is a collaborative effort among ECA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA), the African Business Round Table, the World Bank Group, and several bilateral donors. It will be hosted by the Government of Ghana. The objectives of the Conference are threefold: to promote contacts and interactions between African business persons and foreign investors; to provide a platform for African Governments to outline their adopted or planned policies for creating an investor-friendly climate; and to organize investors forum for exploring investment opportunities in several sectors, namely infrastructure, financial services, telecommunication and agribusiness. A number of African Heads of State are expected to participate in a round-table discussion with chief executives of major global corporations. An African capital markets forum, which will be a multi-country advocacy group bringing together members of stock exchanges, leasing companies, financial institutions, including brokerage firms, and investment funds, will be launched at the conference. The international conference exemplifies the new and effective partnership which ECA seeks to foster, where combined strengths can lead to concrete results.

C. *Relations with other United Nations programmes*

25. The secretariat maintained close cooperation with agencies of the United Nations systems in the following areas:

(a) Development issues and policies: cooperation continued with United Nations Headquarters, on activities related to the implementation of United Nations Project Link; the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in the meeting on the preparation for the Mid-term Review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, as well as inter-secretariat coordination on the implementation of the Programme of Action in the African region; the World Bank, in the seminar on debt strategy;

(b) Trade, regional economic cooperation and integration: cooperation with UNCTAD through participation in activities of the Standing Committee on economic cooperation among developing countries;

(c) Poverty alleviation through sustainable development: cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), on environmental issues in general as well as on matters related to the coordination of activities of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN); the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), on the preparation of the regional input to HABITAT II, in particular participation in the three subregional meetings on HABITAT II preparation in Africa organized by UNCHS, and on issues relating to human settlements in general; UNDP, which continued to provide financial and technical support to ECA's work, in particular the funding of the project on sustainable agriculture and environmental rehabilitation and reconstruction (SAERR); UNFPA, on issues related to population as well as the management of the Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques (IFORD) and the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on agricultural development; and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) on the implementation of Agenda 21 at the regional level;

(d) Human resources development and social transformation: cooperation with the African Women in Crisis Umbrella programme of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM/AFWIC), in which the ECA secretariat jointly organized the Conference on the Legal Status of Refugee and Internally Displaced Women in Africa; and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), on the preparation of the "Atlas of the African Child";

(e) Statistical and information systems development: cooperation with United Nations agencies in the framework of the Committee on African Statistical Development (CASD), in particular organization of a meeting on statistical needs assessment exercises in African countries as well as the organization and servicing of the CASD meetings; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on the organization of the Regional Symposium on Access to Telematics Facilities in Ethiopia;

(f) Natural resources and energy development: consultations and participation in the World Bank international round-table on artisenal mining and conference on African mining and metallurgy; UNEP ad hoc expert group meeting on implications of Agenda 21 on water resources development in Africa;

(g) Infrastructural and structural transformation: cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), by jointly organizing with the Government of Botswana a forum on industrial sector development under the theme "Private sector: Key to sustained economic growth and integration; FAO/UNEP/United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), through participation in the workshop on the sound management of chemicals for countries in Eastern and Southern Africa; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in participation in the meeting of the working party on the chemical industry; UNCTAD, in participation in the seminar on building capacities for technology in LDCs; the International Maritime Organization/International Civil Aviation Organization/International Labour Organisation/World Bank/International Telecommunication Union (IMO/ICAO/ILO/World Bank/ITU) in the implementation of the Transport and Communications Decade activities;

(h) Women in development: cooperation with United Nations agencies in the subregional preparations for the fourth World Conference on Women.

CHAPTER III

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION AND TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

A. *Attendance and organization of work*

26. The thirty-first session of the Commission/twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning was held in the new Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6 to 8 May 1996. At its commencement, the meeting observed a minute of silence in meditation. The meeting was formally opened by H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a message which was read to the Conference. Statements were also delivered at the opening ceremony by Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, H.E. Ambassador Vijay S. Makhan, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), H.E. Mr. Yasushi Kurokouchi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan and special guest of the Commission, and Mr. Ferhat Lounes, Vice-President of the African Development Bank. H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and outgoing Chairman of the thirtieth session of the Commission/twenty-first meeting of Conference of Ministers presided over the opening ceremony. Honourable Adan Noor, Assistant Minister in the office of the Vice-President and Ministry of Planning and National Development of Kenya, moved a vote of thanks.

27. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States of the Commission: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

28. Observers from the following Member States of the United Nations were present: Austria, Belgium, China, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

29. The Holy See, not a Member of the United Nations, was also represented.

30. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: United Nations Department of Policy and Sustainable Development (DPCSD), Regional Commissions New York Office (RCNYO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

31. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank (ADB) were represented.

32. Observers were present from the following intergovernmental organizations: African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD), African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), African Export-Import Bank (AFREXIMB), African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS), Home and Environment Development Association (HEDA), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), League of Arab States (LAS), Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), Regional Centre for Training in Aero-space Surveys

(RECTAS) and Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC).

33. The Conference elected the following officers:

Chairman:	Malawi
First Vice-Chairman:	Ghana
Second Vice-Chairman:	Cameroon
Rapporteur:	Algeria

B. *Agenda*

34. On 6 May 1996, the Conference adopted the following agenda:

Conference theme:
Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century:
The role of the Economic Commission for Africa

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
4. General debate on: Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa.
5. Consideration of the report and recommendations of the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole.
6. Any other business.
7. Date and venue of the thirty-second session of the Commission/twenty-third meeting of the Conference of Ministers.
8. Special event: High-level Forum on "Public expenditure and the poor in Africa".
9. Adoption of the report.
10. Closure of the meeting.

C. *Account of proceedings*

Opening addresses

35. In his opening statement, H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia welcomed participants to Addis Ababa and to this important Conference. He said the meeting was different in more ways than one from previous sessions, not simply because it was taking place in the ultra-modern United Nations Conference Centre, nor because it was being convened by the new ECA Executive Secretary, but primarily because it was taking place at a time when ECA was in the process of making change - change which was overdue and which had been anticipated with great expectation.

36. Noting that there were indeed times when ECA appeared to be losing momentum, the Prime Minister paid tribute to Mr. Amoako for the wisdom he had shown in quickly grasping the serious challenges that ECA faced and for the determination with which he was grappling with the task that lay ahead in renewing and reinvigorating the Commission. He stressed that ECA was a vital institution for Africa. No other existing institution could substitute ECA and none was on the horizon to do so. He underscored the Commission's role in the creation of African institutions, in articulating plans and strategies, advocating African policies and positions and providing technical assistance to member States. He singled out ECA's distinctive role in the formulation of Africa's Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) which had a major impact on policy formulation at the international level especially with respect to the human dimension of structural reforms and adjustment.

37. He remarked that the twenty-second meeting of the Conference was historic because it gave an opportunity to map out the future of ECA with a view to making it an effective institution capable of offering service to Africa - a continent with hope but which finds itself marginalized internationally. He therefore appealed to the Conference to give maximum attention to the blue print for the renewal of ECA because its future depended upon how the process of renewal was undertaken and successfully implemented.

38. The Prime Minister said that Africa could not live and think in isolation. But there should and must be an African perspective which needed to be brought to bear on international issues that directly affected the continent. This was one of

the vital tasks that ECA was required to fulfil and he was extremely pleased that this was one of the important principles that governed the renewal under way to revitalize the Commission. He recognized that the path Africa had to traverse to ensure its economic survival was strewn with so many difficulties that a common position needed to be worked out on vital issues facing Africa.

39. In conclusion, he reminded the Conference that Africans now provided a vivid definition of the saying "United they stand, divided they fall".

40. In a message read on his behalf by Mr. Amoako, Executive Secretary of ECA, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, said that the theme of the Conference, namely "Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century", reflected both the conviction that African cooperation would be critical in enabling the continent to benefit fully from the rapidly changing international economy and the major role ECA was to play in assisting Africa in this transformation.

41. The Secretary-General noted that, at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium, Africa showed greater promise. Average rates of economic growth had improved, political liberalization was taking hold and rehabilitation and reconstruction were gaining momentum in many previously conflict-torn countries. He underlined that the ongoing economic reforms were laying the foundation for rapid and sustained growth.

42. The Secretary-General referred to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa launched on 15 March 1996, as a coordinated and collaborative effort among all agencies of the United Nations system which would assist Africa to achieve its vision of a better future. He stressed that the aim of the Special Initiative was to add momentum to Africa's development and would complement the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). He added that all agencies of the United Nations system would mobilize billions of dollars in external resources for activities such as basic health, basic education, governance, food security, water and sanitation and comprehensive peace building. He stressed that ECA had been entrusted with several specific responsibilities in the implementation of the Special Initiative, and the lead role in some specific activities. This was an indication of his personal commitment to reinforcing regional commissions to enable them to exercise a lead role in the economic and social development of their respective regions.

43. The Secretary-General further emphasized that the renewal process under way in ECA responded to the need to meet the increasing and legitimate demands of member States for greater value for money, cost-effectiveness and economy in the way the United Nations delivers its services. He expressed his strongest support, endorsement and encouragement for the process of reform led by the Executive Secretary.

44. In conclusion, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that the Conference of Ministers would give its full support to the programme and management reforms at ECA.

45. In his statement, the Executive Secretary, Mr.K.Y. Amoako, welcomed participants to the thirty-first session of the Commission/twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning. He expressed his heartfelt thanks to H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Current Chairman of OAU for his continuing support of the work of the Commission and his august presence at this meeting.

46. He also extended a very warm welcome to Ambassador Yasushi Kurokouchi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan, special guest for the meeting. He noted that Japan had become the strongest development partner, the largest donor of official development assistance (ODA) and the provider of well over $US 1 billion a year in bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa.

47. The Executive Secretary said that this Conference was his first opportunity to discuss with Ministers the Commission's plans for a major renewal and the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. After having been with the Commission for 10 months, he had understood that for administrative matters he was responsible for operating under the rules of the United Nations and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. However, he assured participants that ECA was an institution for Africans, operating under African guidance and that his brief was to serve Africa and to ensure that ECA presented a strong voice for the continent for the benefit of its people. Therefore, he was coming to the Conference, his board, to learn but also to act. The directions and guidance of the Conference of Ministers would continue to be welcome. He renewed his thanks

to H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Chairman of the outgoing Bureau, and each of its members for aiding his smooth transition and for their leadership in all the preparatory work of the Conference.

48. The Executive Secretary said that the Conference of Ministers was the culmination of nearly a year-long effort to position ECA to seize the emerging opportunities, take on the responsibilities and to act with far more effectiveness and impact. He believed that renewing ECA was enormously important for the success of the institution. He reaffirmed that he was committed to renewing ECA to serve Africa better. In this regard, he saw a renewed Africa with rising gross domestic product (GDP), continuing reforms, improved terms of trade and an Africa well connected to the world.

49. To make this vision happen required input from all concerned, including a renewed ECA. He said that ECA was in need of renewal because African Governments, the United Nations General Assembly and a number of global and regional institutions had given the Commission specific responsibilities. There were excellent new opportunities as Africa was at a turning point, and innovative leaders and policy makers were on the African scene. Excellence, cost-effectiveness and partnership were the cornerstones of ECA's renewal process. He said that the secretariat's aim was to sharpen the focus of its programmes; adopt new technologies in its operations; foster Africa's ongoing democratization process, particularly with regard to the private sector and civil society; strive for consensus; and increase the secretariat's accountability to member States, the United Nations and Africans at large.

50. The Executive Secretary informed the Conference that the process of renewal had involved thorough-going studies by a number of world class centres of expertise; major reviews with an unprecedented level of in-house participation; and a major consultation four months ago on ECA's proposed programmes with the full Bureau of the Conference of Ministers and an impressive group of African leading ministers, academics, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector leaders. He had also visited a number of African capitals, most recently in North Africa, meeting with ministers and Heads of State.

51. In pursuance of the renewal process, the Executive Secretary informed the Conference of Ministers that he was about to carry out a major reorganization of the ECA secretariat; a redeployment of staff based on careful skills assessments and strict adherence to United Nations personnel rules; a series of management reforms; a system to better assure full accountability; an improved administrative framework in which fairness, transparency and a high level of professionalism would be the rule; and a series of institution-strengthening steps, including staff training capacity building and fellowships to allow outstanding younger Africans to work with ECA and sabbatical programmes.

52. He said that the centrepiece of the renewal process was the reform of ECA's programmes. Twenty-one areas of concentration in nine subprogrammes would be consolidated into five core themes and two cross-cutting ones. The core themes were: facilitating economic and social policy analysis; ensuring food security and sustainable development; strengthening development management; harnessing information for development; and promoting regional cooperation and integration. The two cross-cutting issues would be gender and capacity building.

53. The second component of the process of renewal consisted of a significant reorientation in the nature of the Commission's services to member States, a clearing house for best practices in the continent; a policy integrator; and a catalyst for good ideas, placing greater emphasis on networking and advocacy. The third component was concerned with the reform of ECA's modalities of implementation in line with the organization's objective to be of service in the twenty-first century. To this end, there would be more use of electronic means of communication; improved dissemination of the Commission's products; improved country targeting and close working links with African Ambassadors in Addis Ababa; fewer policy reports and fewer but more goal-oriented meetings; and closer work with member States to rationalize ECA-sponsored institutions in order to avoid superfluity and ineffectiveness.

54. ECA, being part of the United Nations, cherished partnership with other United Nations institutions. Such a partnership was amply demonstrated by his new responsibilities from the United Nations to co-chair the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. ECA would also be seeking partnerships outside the United Nations, with policy networks and centres, donors and international organizations, and by fostering South-South cooperation, namely with countries in Asia and Latin America with the help of United Nations regional commissions.

55. Referring to the proposed Medium-term Plan and the 1996-1997 work programme, he said

that its endorsement would greatly facilitate the restructuring of the programme side. The administrative functions had already been restructured. He said that ECA's reform had been thoughtful and self-initiated rather than hasty and imposed.

56. Referring to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, he assured the Conference that the Special Initiative and the UN-NADAF programme were complementary. He invited member States to take full advantage of the Special Initiative.

57. In conclusion, he reviewed the other agenda items, he particularly drew the attention of the Conference to the action plan for Africa's information society reviewed by TEPCOW, and the progress report on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty. He particularly stressed the need for the Commission to re-examine the usefulness of numerous resolutions adopted at its sessions. He suggested that the resolutions be reviewed on an integrated basis for follow-up purposes to facilitate the streamlining process, which was an important concern within the United Nations system.

58. H.E. Ambassador Vijay S. Makhan, Assistant Secretary-General of OAU, said that the Conference provided another opportunity to reflect upon Africa's social and economic situation. He remarked that the Prime Minister's speech had set the tone for the meeting and underscored the significance of the Conference as the Commission focused attention on the twenty-first century. He informed the meeting that the OAU Secretary-General had worked closely with the Executive Secretary with a view to maintaining the long-standing close relationship between the two organizations.

59. He acknowledged that analyzing the socio-economic situation in Africa was neither an exciting nor interesting exercise because all the indicators for gauging Africa's socio-economic performance and trends were negative, with 50 per cent of the population living in absolute poverty which was projected to increase into the beginning of the next decade. He deplored endless conflicts, wars, disease and poverty and environmental degradation which the continent was facing. He observed that, on the positive side, Africa was a continent endowed with immense resources both physical and human, and its leaders had, on several occasions, adopted programmes and declarations that emphasized their responsibilities and commitments to accelerate the socio-economic transformation of the continent.

60. The Assistant Secretary-General noted that OAU's experience with past externally induced programmes had not always been encouraging and have sometimes undermined Africa's home-grown programmes. This had created a feeling that African Governments were incapable of formulating "technically sound" programmes. He therefore expressed satisfaction with frequent references to and affirmation of the Cairo Agenda for Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development as being a major source and inspiration of the recent programmes that had been announced in favour of Africa's development.

61. He commended the Executive Secretary for his proposals for reforms articulated in the strategic directions for ECA document, expressed OAU's full support for them and called on the Conference to endorse them after careful consideration. He offered specific comments on some of the themes in the strategic directions. Referring to economic and social policy analysis, he asked why, despite decades of higher education, Africa still depended on the outside world for its socio-economic data and foreign so-called "experts" that cost the continent huge sums of money. He underscored the importance of the proposed focus to be given in the analysis to Africa's external debt crisis, particularly in relation to assisting African countries in the Paris Club negotiations and advised countries to invite ECA's participation in those negotiations. He emphasized that ECA's programme on dissemination of information for development needed to focus on changing official attitude towards technology inflows and information generally, so that lengthy periods of approval, attempts at censorship, and unwarranted and unjustified high charges are eliminated. He expressed support for ECA's strategy and approach in the area of regional integration which focused on rationalizing the myriad of organizations in the region.

62. The Assistant Secretary-General informed the meeting that the issues he had commented upon are among those to be examined at the first session of the Economic and Social Commission of the African Economic Community which will be held in Addis Ababa on 11 and 12 June at the Ministerial level, to be preceded by a meeting of experts on 6 and 7 June. He further informed the meeting that preparations for these meetings were being undertaken in close cooperation with ECA, ADB and with the participation of the regional economic communities. He underscored the special recognition which the Executive Secretary's proposals for renewal of ECA had given to ECA's partners and stressed that ECA and OAU

should continue to work together in the interest of Africa's economic development. He drew particular satisfaction from the assertion in the strategic directions document that "ECA will not surrender its vision of what is best for Africa when entering partnerships with other influential multilateral development institutions".

63. In conclusion, he stressed that the Conference should not merely endorse ECA's proposals but that each member State should at national level reflect the new directions in their national programmes and plans for socio-economic development.

64. H.E. Mr. Yasushi Kurokouchi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan and special guest of the Commission at this session, expressed his Government's and his own personal appreciation for the invitation extended to him to participate at the twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning. He expressed the support of the Government of Japan for ECA.

65. Ambassador Kurokouchi observed that, since the 1960s, the United Nations General Assembly had proclaimed ten-year development programmes in the form of the International Development Strategy Decades which over the years were politicized in the context of the East-West divide. With the end of the cold war, the North-South relationship was entering a new era. The Tokyo Conference on development strategy organized in March 1996 in Japan, at which the ECA Executive Secretary participated, was an example of this new relationship. That conference marked a new partnership for development in which both developing and developed countries would cooperate.

66. He said that the Tokyo Conference on development strategy was a follow-up to the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) that was held in 1993. Emphasizing that TICAD provided an opportunity for the international community to reaffirm its commitment to supporting Africa's efforts for development, he said that Japan had decided to hold TICAD II in 1998 in Japan, whose preparatory meeting would take place in 1997. Moreover, Japan had also decided to launch three initiatives with financial commitments in the context of the implementation of TICAD. These were: (a) Education for all African children to attain full primary education by the year 2015, with a financial grant of $US 100 million over the next three years; (b) the Asia/Africa Cooperation within the context of South-South cooperation, with a financial commitment of an additional $US 2 million to come from Japan's contribution to UNDP; and (c) eradication of poliomyelitis in Africa by the year 2000.

67. Ambassador Kurokouchi noted that there were many crucial global issues to be addressed in the post-cold war era. These included deteriorating environment, population, food security and poverty alleviation. He urged the United Nations and other agencies to find solutions to these problems through improved coordination and partnership.

68. He said that Africa's development would attract donor support if the strategy on which it was based met certain criteria. Such a strategy should address set targets that were realistic, feasible, objective and measurable. It should also give priority importance to human resources development, as well as adjust or reform organizational and institutional structures to be able to achieve development goals.

69. He referred to the five priority areas defined by Japan in TICAD as including democratization, economic reform, human resources development, environment protection and great effectiveness and efficiency in providing assistance. The new ECA strategy in which five themes and two cross-cutting programmes had been identified was critically important for African development. To support this effort, Ambassador Kurokouchi announced Japanese financial assistance of $US 600,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD).

70. In his statement, Mr. Ferhat Lounes, Vice-President of ADB, said that the current economic and social situation in Africa called for operational strategies and concrete ways and means to generate sustainable growth and development so as to break the vicious circle of poverty. He stated that ADB shared the vision of the Executive Secretary of ECA about Africa approaching the crossroads on its epic journey, requiring decisive reversal of its current marginalization and exclusion from the competitive global market place.

71. The Vice-President said that the complex nature of the future challenges in the continent required a reassessment of the organization and management of development institutions to enhance their capacity for meeting their objectives. He briefed the Conference on the progress being made in the ongoing institutional reforms in

the Bank Group. He said that the reforms addressed four main areas: the formulation and implementation of specific measures for improving the quality of Bank Group operations; the adoption of proactive measures to enhance financial management; the institution of a new organization structure; and the examination of issues relating to institutional governance.

72. The African Development Bank had been also making its contributions to regional initiatives and programmes. ADB will focus over the period 1997-2001 on support for strengthening production capacity and socio-economic infrastructures; policy reforms; private sector development; and economic integration. In conclusion, he said that the Bank would therefore continue to be actively engaged in working with its African member countries to improve the welfare and livelihood of the peoples of the continent.

73. H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairman of the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of Ministers said that the process of renewal of ECA was timely and underscored the need to strengthen ECA for serving Africa better. He urged member States to give their full support to the renewal of ECA.

74. Honourable Adan Noor, Assistant Minister in the office of the Vice-President and Ministry of Planning and National Development of Kenya moved a vote of thanks on behalf of the Conference to the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for the warm hospitality accorded to participants since their arrival in Addis Ababa. He thanked H.E. Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, for his inspiring statement which had proposed relevant solutions to the problems facing the continent. He added that the statement would guide the work of the Conference.

75. The Minister congratulated the experts for the excellent work done at TEPCOW and commended the ECA Executive Secretary for bringing a renewed and insightful vision to the Commission. He assured the Chairman that delegations would spare no efforts for the success of the meeting.

General debate: Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa (agenda item 4)

76. Several participants and observers, including representatives of United Nations agencies, regional and international intergovernmental organizations and development partners, participated in the policy debate.

77. Participants unanimously welcomed the Executive Secretary, Mr. K.Y. Amoako, on his appointment as chief executive of the Commission. They expressed their appreciation for the renewal process he has initiated in the Commission and the vision guiding the reform, as articulated in the strategic directions document. Member States expressed support for the renewal process for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was timely, considering the socio-economic situation prevailing in many African countries and the need for the Commission to reposition itself to support member States in dealing with the challenges confronting them. Secondly, the thrust of the strategic directions was consistent with the priorities of African countries as indicated in various programmes, including the Cairo Agenda. Thirdly, the renewal process was essential for the Commission to be able to assist African countries to be more competitive in a globalizing and liberalizing world economy. Fourthly, the reform of ECA was part of the ongoing reforms and restructuring of the United Nations system.

78. Several participants noted with satisfaction that ECA's programme would concentrate on five major themes and two cross-cutting issues of gender and capacity building as outlined in the strategic directions document and the proposed Medium-term Plan. They said that the priority themes were very relevant to Africa's development challenges.

79. In commenting on the five thematic areas and the two cross-cutting issues, a number of participants emphasized the importance their countries placed on food security and poverty reduction, regional integration and cooperation, information technology, and integration of African economies into the world economy, including South-South cooperation. They cautioned ECA to avoid past pitfalls of not implementing well-articulated agendas and programmes and urged the Commission to take appropriate measures to ensure successful implementation of the strategic directions. They stressed that in the process of reforms, ECA should ensure that it strengthened

its role as the think-tank for Africa, a clearing house for best practices and a facilitator of Africa's development. Accordingly, the Commission should ensure that it retained its independence of thought and action while building strategic alliances.

80. Underlining the need for ECA's reforms to be comprehensive, several participants expressed the view that the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) should be strengthened to serve member States better through promoting effective cooperation with subregional groupings. In that respect, they called for improved leadership, deployment of quality staff and allocation of additional financial resources to the MULPOCs, with a view to increasing visibility and impact of ECA at the subregional level. Member States should be availed of existing expertise at the MULPOCs in order to enable them to determine what expertise they could call upon.

81. For their part, the representatives of Africa's development partners welcomed ECA's renewal and restructuring process. They appreciated the efforts that the Commission was devoting to renew itself in order to serve Africa better. They welcomed the process of rationalization of the Commission's operations, its efforts to become more cost-effective and impact-oriented as well as to develop effective partnerships. They indicated that these reforms were long overdue. They commended the Commission for integrating gender issues in its new strategic vision and for the commitment to strengthen the African Centre for Women. They also commended ECA for taking the lead in the reforms of the United Nations system.

82. Some representatives of Africa's development partners also expressed concern that internal conflicts and political instability continued to be a serious impediment to Africa's development. They expressed the hope that measures would be put in place to resolve these conflicts. They also stated that reforms started at ECA should be extended to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with a view to decentralizing some of the functions of the Council to the regional commissions which are in a better position to reflect the regional dimensions of development. They also called for general reforms of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Security Council in order for the representation in the Council to reflect equitable regional balance. These representatives pledged to work with Africa and ECA in the implementation of the Commission's renewal process and the new strategic directions in order to accelerate the process of development on the continent, in general. Some pledged to increase their financial resources for ECA's programmes.

83. The representatives of some United Nations agencies and ECA-sponsored institutions emphasized the importance of environmental issues in Africa's development process and welcomed ECA's focus on the nexus issue of population growth, food security and the environment. The ECA-sponsored institutions indicated the important role that they play in advancing Africa's development and as a reservoir of human capacity that member States could utilize. They also asked for ECA's continued support and pledged to work with the Commission.

84. Participants reviewed the economic and social situation prevailing in the African countries and the development challenges that the continent faced at the threshold of the twenty-first century in the context of the emerging global economy. Among the problems reported to have set back economic performance in some countries in 1995 were severe drought conditions and persisting conflict situations. Rapid rates of population growth persisting in almost all the African countries coupled with low rates of economic growth meant that per capita GDP growth rates remained low in most countries. The persistence of weak economic performance since the previous decade in the face of a high population growth rate had progressively increased the incidence of poverty, high rates of unemployment, food insecurity and pressures on the environment across the continent.

85. It was noted that poor economic performance in Africa coincided with a global economic situation that had recovered from the sluggish conditions observed in the early 1990s, global economic output growth having increased from barely 1.0 per cent in 1993 to 2.6 per cent in 1995. Furthermore, the share of low- and middle-income countries in the global gross pro-duct had increased rapidly in recent years. The entry into force of a new international trade regime managed by the new World Trade Organization (WTO), the emergence of regional trade blocs and sophisticated new trade protectionism, and the exposure of African producers to external competition following African countries' decision to open their markets - all posed serious challenges to which African countries had to adjust. Participants reiterated that Africa had to face the formidable challenge of matching global competitiveness, in terms of both the quality and the price of its pro-

ducts, for it to tap the benefits of international trade and finance arising from globalization, like other low- and middle-income countries with rapidly expanding economies.

86. It was observed, however, that in their attempts to gear up to meet the challenge of international competitiveness, African countries continued to be severely handicapped by a heavy external debt burden. At the same time, African countries had to cope with the twin problems of sluggish economic performance at home and an increasingly competitive external environment. A number of participants reported that their countries had embarked upon programmes of socio-economic policy reforms and structural adjustments, supported by the Bretton Woods financial institutions. Among the elements of the reforms that were being implemented were the tightening of fiscal and monetary policy; macroeconomic stabilization; promotion of a greater role for the private sector in economic development; privatization of public enterprises; public administration downsizing; and external trade liberalization. As a consequence of these steps to reform African economies to put them on a more sound footing, participants observed that the situation across Africa was no longer one of undifferentiated gloom.

87. Some countries which have persisted with reforms for a decade or more reported sustained annual rates of growth in economic output exceeding 5 per cent. Such countries further reported that both the size of their fiscal deficits in proportion to their GDP as well as their rates of inflation had decreased markedly. Sound macroeconomic policy stance, in some others, was leading to improvements in international competitiveness. These countries, participants noted, illustrated the potential of all the remaining countries in Africa to attain the development goals, given dogged determination on their part and continued international support.

88. Concern was expressed about the heavy social costs of structural adjustments, but this was a price that had to be paid for stronger economic performance in future. Several participants, however, indicated the measures which their governments had taken to protect the vulnerable segments of society. It was observed that ECA had an important role to play in providing support to African-led socio-economic reforms that would benefit all Africans, reinforcing African countries' efforts to become more fully integrated into the global economy.

89. A number of countries reported to the Conference that they were either in the process of formulating or implementing medium-term national development plans or long-term strategic visions for development to provide a longer-term framework within which their short-term policy reforms and structural adjustments were situated. The objectives of such plans related to the attainment of sustainable economic diversification, focusing on employment creation, poverty alleviation, public sector reform, provision of infrastructure coupled with a measure of cost recovery, human capital development and appropriate population, rural development, environment and land use policies. In some other countries, emphasis was also placed on the need to meet the basic needs of the growing population; improve living conditions and create employment - all of which could not be attained without a vibrant economy, public administration and strong private enterprises and efficient communications. It was noted that all these were consistent with the five programme areas and two cross-cutting issues provided for in the ECA strategic directions document.

90. Some participants reported on the process of political reform under way in their countries towards the establishment of civilian-led good governance and democratic pluralism or return to civil rule after multiparty elections. Participants therefore shared the view that, while the picture was not yet uniformly bright across the continent, there were vistas of hope that the situation was set to improve from now on.

91. Participants welcomed the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa. They noted that the thrust of the Special Initiative coincided with the Cairo Agenda for Action as well as with the strategic directions of ECA. This was viewed as a clear sign that the United Nations remained concerned about Africa's development problems and was prepared to assist in the search for their solutions. Noting that the Special Initiative was the latest addition to a long list of the United Nations programmes dedicated to Africa's development, participants emphasized that successful implementation of the Special Initiative would require political mobilization both in the continent and the world at large, in order to avoid the fate of some previous United Nations programmes which had a poor record of accomplishment.

92. Participants noted that regional cooperation and economic integration remained a key tool in the strategy for Africa's development. This was reflected in all the landmark development strategies for Africa such as the Lagos Plan of Action

(LPA) adopted in 1980 and Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) adopted in 1985 and, more recently, the Cairo Agenda for Action. It was observed that, in spite of all the enthusiasm for cooperation and integration, which had resulted in the establishment of subregional economic groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), much remained to be done in accelerating the pace of integration. In that regard, ECA was urged to assist the member States in strengthening their institutional structures for arrangement of regional integration at national level. The enhancement of the capacity of the secretariats of Africa's regional economic groupings and in the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community was also emphasized by providing technical assistance.

93. Participants underlined the importance of information as a basic tool for accelerating socio-economic development in Africa and the fundamental role that ECA could play in facilitating Africa's participation in the information revolution. In this context, particular emphasis was placed on the need to implement the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) which was primarily designed to help Africa to accelerate its development plans, stimulate growth and provide new opportunities in education, trade, health care, job creation and food security through the building of information and decision support systems. It was further observed that by maintaining very close relations with individual African countries and several subregional and regional institutions, ECA should, in principle, have access to a large number of information networks existing in the continent. Therefore, the Commission should be in a position to assist member States and African institutions in better organizing the information available at national, subregional and regional levels and in enhancing the scope and reliability of such information, as well as its comparability and accessibility. Participants also expressed the view that ECA should assist member States and African institutions in critically assessing and exploiting the information that could be obtained by accessing international information networks, such as the Internet.

94. A number of representatives of donor countries emphasized the need for African Governments to establish clear, realistic and feasible development strategies with a view to furthering economic liberalization and enhancing human resource development, developing enduring institutions, forging dynamic partnership with the private sector and promoting regional economic integration. Representatives of Africa's development partners also underlined the importance of South-South cooperation as a substantial supplement to Africa's efforts towards economic recovery, cooperation and integration. In that context, the Conference took note of the establishment, last year, of the Korea-ECA Cooperation Fund which was aimed at strengthening cooperation between the Government of Korea and African countries.

Consideration of the report and recommendations of the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW) (agenda item 5)

95. The Chairman of the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole presented the report of the Committee as well as the draft resolutions and decisions recommended for adoption by the Conference or brought to its attention, as contained in document E/ECA/CM.22/13.

96. The Conference took note of the presentation and examined the report of the Committee as well as the resolutions and other decisions contained therein. In considering the report, the participants made the following observations:

97. Under agenda item 5 (c) relating to exploiting information technology to accelerate the socio-economic development of the continent, one participant suggested that Africa should adapt available information technology in exploiting the available data on natural resources. In that context, it was suggested that the existing subregional and regional centres such as the Regional Centre for Servicing in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), based in Nairobi, be strengthened. The representative of Algeria expressed his country's interest in participating in the work of the High-level Group of African Experts on the African Information Society Initiative.

98. Under agenda item 6(a)(iii) on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, one participant deplored the lack of progress in the implementation of the Paris Declaration/Programme of Action for the LDCs. He suggested that ECA should liaise with United Nations agencies and other international organizations such as European Union (EU) and the African,

Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP), which have similar programmes on LDCs, in implementing activities related to the improvement of the situation of the African LDCs.

99. Under agenda item 10 on Special event: Panel discussion on the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa, a participant welcomed the initiative of convening groups of high-level experts to review and enhance major activities undertaken by the secretariat, and wondered whether the practice would be continued. Another participant urged that the governments of member States should be involved in the selection of these experts. Other participants, on the other hand, were of the opinion that restricting the selection only to governments would deny the region the opportunity of benefitting from a much wider spectrum of intellectuals, some of whom may not be African but have Africa's interest at heart. The Executive Secretary assured the Conference that the practice would indeed continue. He explained that the experts who made up these groups were invited in their personal capacities and that the secretariat needed flexibility in the selection of such experts.

100. The Conference adopted the report of the Committee in the light of its deliberations on it. It also amended as appropriate and adopted the draft resolutions and decisions annexed to that report.

Any other business (agenda item 6)

101. The Executive Secretary informed the Conference that, as part of the efforts to rationalize the Commission's intergovernmental machinery, he would be preparing a report on the possibilities of biennializing the meetings of the Conference of Ministers, for the consideration of the Conference at its next meeting. The Conference welcomed the proposal but urged the Executive Secretary, in preparing the report, to consider all the implications that the proposal might have.

102. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya launched an appeal for African countries to demonstrate their solidarity with Libya against the air embargo imposed on his country by the United Nations Security Council. He stated that the embargo constituted a serious impediment to technological, economic and social progress as well as to the improvement of living conditions for people in the Jamahiriya. He reaffirmed the support of his country to the renewal process under way at ECA.

103. The representative of Algeria proposed, and the Conference adopted by acclamation, a motion on the decoration of the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa. The motion is annexed to this report as resolution 825 (XXXI) on Decoration of the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa.

Date and venue of the thirty-second session of the Commission/twenty-third meeting of the Conference of Ministers (agenda item 7)

104. The Conference decided that it would hold its next meeting at the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 28 to 30 April 1997. The meeting would be preceded by the eighteenth meeting of TEPCOW from 22 to 25 April 1997 also in Addis Ababa. It was agreed that in case any event interfered with the proposed dates, the secretariat would make the necessary adjustments and inform member States accordingly.

Special event: High-level Forum on "Public expenditure and the poor in Africa" (agenda item 8)

105. Under this agenda item, a High-level Forum on "Public expenditure and the poor in Africa" was held on 7 May 1996. The report of the High-level Forum is contained in document E/ECA/CM.22/-CRP.4.

Adoption of the report (agenda item 9)

106. The Conference adopted the present report.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 10)

107. The Executive Secretary read the final communique which is attached to this report.

108. Thereafter, the Executive Secretary made his closing remarks. He thanked participants for having made the twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers a success, at a critical time in the history of ECA and the continent. He observed that the Conference of Ministers, ECA's highest policy organ, had given the Commission the green light to implement the reorganization and renewal for which the Commission had been preparing itself over the preceding 10 months. The Executive Secretary expressed profound gratitude to the member States for their strong support for the renewal programme, for their input of ideas and proposals to make it even stronger and more

relevant, and for empowering the Commission to serve Africa better.

109. He acknowledged that there were many challenges ahead in putting energy and muscle and careful thought into the management of reforms and into the Commission's new programme focus, striking the right balance of continuity and new initiatives in all those areas. He promised, however, that the year to the next Conference of Ministers would be one of practical action, creative planning and networking. He said that the year until the next Conference, at ECA, would be marked by hard work, that the member States would be hearing good things about what ECA was doing and that they would be closely involved in the Commission's work. In that regard, the year would be marked by revitalized, active two-way contacts between the Commission and the member States. Expressing his gratitude for the hard work done by the participants to TEPCOW and by the ECA secretariat, he voiced his conviction that a bright future for Africa was within reach, that a renewed ECA could position itself, in the coming years, to help its member States to achieve an African renaissance and an economic and social re-birth in the twenty-first century.

110. On his part, the Chairman of the Conference of Ministers, H.E. Mr. Aleke Banda, observed that the participants were going away with a renewed feeling of confidence in ECA - thanks to the Executive Secretary for his insightful determination, vigour and courage to revitalize the Commission to better serve Africa's interests. He pledged that the Bureau and the member States looked forward to cooperating and working with the new Executive Secretary towards achieving the lofty goals and objectives he had laid before the Conference.

111. He noted that there was a general consensus that it was necessary for ECA to reposition itself to serve Africa better. He observed that it was gratifying, therefore, that ECA's renewal programme was premised on the changes sweeping throughout Africa as well as the challenges facing Africa today and the opportunities at the continent's disposal, including the critical nexus of food security, population and the environment; the explosion of world trade and the information revolution through which Africa could either leapfrog ahead or be pushed aside and left behind.

112. He called upon the member States to complement ECA's efforts at renewal, by applying the renewal programme in individual countries. He proposed further that such a renewal process also needed to pervade to the community or even the individual level. In that regard, he observed that for Africa to move out of its crisis, it was necessary to change the collective attitude towards work, to put in much more effort and commitment, and for all to aim higher.

113. He expressed gratitude to the Government and people of Ethiopia for the hospitality that they had extended to participants and to H.E. the Prime Minister, Mr. Meles Zenawi, for his opening address to the Conference. He also thanked the ECA secretariat, the interpreters and all the supporting staff who had worked tirelessly to make this Conference a success.

114. The Chairman then declared the meeting closed.

LIST OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS AT ITS TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

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CHAPTER IV

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS AT ITS TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

A. *Resolutions*

809 (XXXI). *New directions for the Economic Commission for Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the terms of reference of the Commission as adopted by Economic and Social Council resolution 671A(XXV) of 29 April 1958 and amended by its resolutions 974 D.I(XXXVI) of 5 July 1963, 1343 (XLV) of 18 July 1968 and 1978/68 of 4 August 1978,

Recalling further the various resolutions that have implications on the mandate and operations of the Commission including, in particular, General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, General Assembly resolutions 33/202 of 29 January 1979 and 44/211 of 21 December 1989,

Noting with appreciation the endorsement by the Economic and Social Council of Commission resolution 718 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991 on the revitalization of the mandate and operational framework of the regional economic commissions as well as Commission resolution 726 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992 on strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa to face Africa's development challenges in the 1990s and 779 (XXIX) of 4 May 1994 on strengthening the operational capacity of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions 44/177 of 19 December 1990, 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and those located in developing countries strengthened in the context of the overall objectives of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization process,

Having examined in-depth the documents entitled "Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa"[1] and the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001[2],

1. Expresses its appreciation for the process of reform and renewal of the Commission initiated by the Executive Secretary;

2. Endorses the new orientations of the Commission as outlined in the Strategic Directions document;

3. Endorses further the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001 bearing in mind that in its implementation due emphasis will be given to the need for greater selectivity and impact;

4. Encourages the Executive Secretary to continue to strengthen the process of renewal and reform of the Commission in consultation with member States;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary in close collaboration with the Bureau of the Commission to revise the 1996-1997 work programme which revision has become necessary to reflect the new orientation of the Commission's work and to ensure a smooth transition in 1997 to the next Medium-term Plan. The revision must be within resources already approved for the Economic Commission for Africa by the General Assembly and must pay due regard to the efficiency measures required to implement the relevant decisions of the General Assembly regarding the 1996-1997 budget;

6. Appeals to the Secretary-General to request the General Assembly to consider the revised work programme in conjunction with its review of the Medium-term Plan 1998-2001.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

810 (XXXI). *Strengthening of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs)*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolution 611 (XXII) of 24 April 1987 on acceleration of the process of subregional economic integration in Africa and the new role of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres as well as its resolution 702 (XXV) of 19 May 1990 on the transformation and strengthening of the Centres so as to enable them to play an effective role as catalysts for subregional economic integration,

Recalling further its resolution 708 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991 on speeding up the economic integration of Africa and the strengthening of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres and its resolution 745 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993 on the strengthening and rationalization of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres,

Taking note of the new strategic vision of the Commission as outlined in the document entitled: Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa,

Mindful of member States expressed interest to enhance the role of Multinational Programming and Operational Centres in their respective subregions as effective partners of member States, the subregional economic communities and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in its Report on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa,[3] particularly the recommendation related to the decentralization of resources to the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres to make them more effective,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to take the necessary steps to strengthen the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres by putting at their disposal sufficient and competent staff as well as the necessary financial resources including recourse to competent consultants and to endow them with sufficient administrative autonomy as appropriate to enable them operate effectively;

2. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to take the necessary measures to ensure that the Centres play their role more efficiently as centres of excellence for the exchange of experiences and information and provision of support for the implementation of regional economic integration;

3. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to undertake, in coordination with regional intergovernmental organizations, the necessary consultations with a view to recommending whether or not to reinstate the subregional conferences of ministers of the Centres to enable them to focus more on specific subregional priorities and enhance the Commission's presence at the subregional and country levels;

4. Further calls upon the Executive Secretary to undertake a study on the rationalization of the membership of the different Centres and make appropriate recommendations;

5. Appeals to member States to contribute to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development in favour of the institutional strengthening of and activities to be undertaken at the Centres, and to put national experts at the disposal of the Centres, at their own expense, for short assignments;

6. Calls upon the United Nations Development Programme, bilateral and multilateral funding agencies to support programmes of technical cooperation at the Centres, in favour of member States and the intergovernmental organizations;

7. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to follow-up on the implementation of this resolution and to report thereon to the next Conference of Ministers.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

811 (XXXI). *The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991 on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Cairo Agenda for Action: Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development,

Concerned that the economic, human and environmental challenges facing Africa continue to be of unparalleled severity in spite of Africa's efforts and assistance of the international community,

Conscious of the need to give top priority to African development in the international agenda, Cognizant of the important role which the United Nations has been playing in mobilizing international support for the cause of African development,

Convinced that the prospects for accelerating Africa's development are, in many respects, more opportune at present than they have been in the past in spite of the continuing severity of economic and social conditions,

Having examined in-depth the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa,

Having examined also the report of the Joint Inspection Unit[4] entitled: "Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF): Towards a more operational approach",

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for establishing the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa;

2. Appreciates that the priorities of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa are fully congruent with Africa's own priorities, particularly as enunciated in the Cairo Agenda for Action and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s;

3. Appreciates further that the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa represents a set of concrete and coordinated actions designed to maximize support for African development within the framework of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and as such is reinforcing and not duplicative of the latter;

4. Endorses the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa;

5. Calls upon the international community, particularly the United Nations system, to extend effective support to African countries to enable them to fully realize the objectives and targets of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, and in particular mobilize the targeted levels of resources required to implement the Special Initiative;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to harmonize the monitoring, evaluation and reporting as related to the Special Initiative and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and submit to the Conference of Ministers such reports at regular intervals.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

812 (XXXI). *Implementation of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI)*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling resolution 795 (XXX) of 3 May 1995 on building Africa's information highway which requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to constitute a high level working group to develop an action plan on information and communication technologies to accelerate socio-economic development in African countries,

Appreciative of the initiative contained in document E/ECA/CM/22.6 related to the building of Africa's information society,

Convinced that building Africa's information society will help Africa to accelerate its development plans, stimulate growth and provide new opportunities in education, trade, health care, job creation and food security, helping African countries to leap-frog stages of development and raise their standards of living;

Sharing the vision of an African Information Society which calls for the building of information and decision support systems to enhance policy formulation, fostering a new generation of Africans capable of using information and communication technologies, building African information resources and linking Africa regionally and globally to the information age,

1. Expresses its thanks to the high-level working group for developing the African Information Society Initiative action framework;

2. Adopts in principle the African Information Society Initiative as an action framework for building Africa's Information Society and calls upon member States to incorporate the African Information Society Initiative in their national development plans according to national needs and priorities;

3. Calls upon the Economic Commission for Africa, in consultation with member States, along with the International Telecommunication Union,

the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank and international and bilateral partners in the harnessing of information for development priority area of the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa to use African Information Society Initiative as a guiding framework;

4. Urges member States to utilize the capacities and experiences of national, subregional and regional African centres of excellence in the enrichment and implementation of the African Information Society Initiative;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to:

(a) Take action, in particular mobilizing funding and technical assistance, in cooperation with member States, regional organizations such as the Pan-African Telecommunications Union and the Regional African Satellite Communication System, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, bilateral and international partners to realize the goal of the African Information Society Initiative;

(b) Incorporate the action framework into the secretariat's work programme under the new strategic directions of the Commission programme area on harnessing information for development;

(c) Set up a regional mechanism to assist in development, follow-up and coordinate the implementation of African Information Society Initiative programmes and projects;

(d) Establish a gender-balanced African technical committee to advise on programmes and projects and to evaluate results;

(e) Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into the policy document "African Information Society Initiative" in order to respond to the needs of both women and men appropriately and equitably;

6. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to report to the next Conference of Ministers on the progress of implementing this resolution.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

813 (XXXI). *Amendment to resolution 757 (XXVIII) on the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission related to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolution 757 (XXVIII) of 5 May 1993,

Recalling further a resolution adopted by the first Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment on justification and scope of action of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment,

Having taken note of the Report of the Executive Secretary on the consultations between the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment with the Economic Commission for Africa concerning the scope of activities of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment,[6]

1. Decides to amend resolution 757 (XXVIII), section B.2, last paragraph to read as follows:

> "This Conference subsumes the functions of the Inter-governmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment, which is hereby abolished";

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Fifteen or the Bureau of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment to make recommendation to the regular session of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning in 1998 for final decision on the status of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment vis-à-vis the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, on the basis of the outcome of the seventh session of the latter in 1997.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

814 (XXXI). *Implementation of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1993-2002)*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 47/177 of 22 December 1992 and 49/107 of December 1994 on the adoption of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the call made therein to the African countries and international community to take concrete steps to ensure the full and successful implementation of the programme,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolutions 1993/65 of July 1993 and 1994/41 of July 1994 on the implementation of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa which, inter alia, urged African countries to give priority to the mobilization of their own financial resources and invited Africa's development partners and development finance institutions to contribute the financial and technical resources for the implementation of the programme for the second Decade,

Recalling further the Mauritius Declaration on Africa's accelerated industrial recovery and development in the context of the second Industrial Development for Africa (1993-2002) and beyond,

Recalling the Yaoundé Declaration and resolution GC5/Res.20, which were adopted by the fifth session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization which had accorded high priority to the industrialization of Africa and to the realization of the objectives of the second Decade,

Mindful of its resolutions 780 (XXIX) of 4 May 1994 on the implementation of the programme of the second Decade, 781 (XXIX) of 4 May 1994 on the development of the private sector for the accelerated implementation of the programme for the second Decade and 782 (XXIX) of 4 May 1994 on the development of basic industries for the structural transformation of African economies,

Reaffirming the primary responsibilities of the African countries in the implementation of the programme for the second Decade and the need for mobilization of their own resources and for substantial flow of technical and financial resources from the international community towards the industrialization of Africa,

1. Appeals to all African countries and to African intergovernmental organizations to take concrete measures and actions to ensure full implementation of their national and subregional programmes for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

2. Calls upon African countries which have not yet done so to revise their national programmes, in cooperation with the private sector, and concretize their industrial projects for implementation as well as to prepare action-oriented plans for their realization and implementation, including the establishment of corresponding institutions for their implementation;

3. Also calls upon African countries to include the programme of the second Decade in their respective national plans and to set up their national follow-up committees if they have not done so;

4. Specifically urges international development finance institutions, particularly the World Bank, the Arab Bank for the Economic Development of Africa, the African Development Bank and African subregional banks and funds to allocate substantial resources to the implementation of the programme of the second Decade at the national and subregional levels;

5. Further calls upon African States to take concrete policy, institutional and other measures to ensure implementation of a sustainable industrial development through the second Decade programme by, among others, the promotion of the cleaner production approach to industrial project investments and of the application of the environmental impact assessment to industrial project investments proposed in the second Decade programme;

6. Decides to dissolve the functions of the Committee of Ten and requests the joint secretariat to assist the bureau of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry and the Decade national committees to follow up the implementation of the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

7. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to undertake concrete follow-up actions for the promotion of the second Decade at the international level;

8. Adopts the mobilization of financial resources and the promotion of small and medium enterprises/small and medium industries as themes for 1996 and 1997 for Africa Industrialization Day;

9. Appeals to the General Assembly to allocate increased resources to the Commission to enable it to support African countries in their efforts towards the implementation of the second Decade;

10. Calls upon African countries to take concrete policy, institutional and other measures to ensure successful implementation of their national Decade programmes, particularly the establishment of an enabling environment to ensure active participation of the private sector in the implementation of the programme as well as the attraction of investments in identified industrial projects;

11. Requests African countries, the Commission, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Organization of African Unity to undertake in 1997 a mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the programme for the second Decade at national, subregional and regional levels and prepare country, subregional and regional reports to the Conference at its next meeting;

12. Also requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to accord high priority in organizing subregional and national investment forms as well as utilization of African consultants in their activities related to the second Decade;

13. Further requests the Commission and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to hold subregional meetings on revision, concretization, evaluation and assessment of the respective programmes for the second Decade and to elaborate the action plans for their implementation;

14. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to report jointly on the implementation of the present resolution to the Conference of African Ministers of Industry at its next meeting.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

815 (XXXI). *Mobilization of resources for industrialization in Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/177 of 22 December 1992 adopting the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa,

Recalling also resolution GC5/Res.12 and the Yaoundé Declaration adopted by the fifth session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the second Ministerial Symposium on Industrialization of Least Developed Countries,

Recalling further resolution 2 (XI) adopted at its eleventh meeting on the development of the private sector for the accelerated implementation of the programme for the second Decade and beyond,

Bearing in mind the major objectives of its mandate in accelerating the pace of industrialization in the region through the harmonization of industrial policies and strategies of member States and of relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as ensuring the building and utilization of critical capacities in Africa,

Conscious of the central role of industrialization in the socio-economic transformation of Africa,

Considering the new international environment characterized by Uruguay Round Agreements that led to the creation of the World Trade Organization,

Also considering the paucity of domestic savings which compelled African countries to create an enabling environment for foreign investments,

Considering further the guarantee of intellectual property rights as one of the basic prerequisites required by the private investors to mobilize resources for industries,

1. Takes note of document CAMI.12/8/ICE/-1995/8 entitled "Mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the programme for the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa";

2. *Also takes note* of document CAMI.12/9/-ICE/1995/9 entitled "Development of human resources for industrialization in Africa";

3. *Expresses concern* about the adverse impact of mounting external debt, collapse of commodity prices and decreases in resources flow to Africa;

4. *Calls upon* African countries to persevere in their efforts to create and maintain an enabling environment for private sector development and the growth of private capital inflows, especially in productive activities through the institution of the necessary macroeconomic framework which would emphasize improving infrastructural and human resources development capacities;

5. *Further calls upon* African Governments to create and enhance an enabling environment for domestic resources mobilization;

6. *Invites* Africa's development partners to extend every necessary support for improving investment conditions for both domestic and foreign investors by substantially increasing the flow of official development assistance resources, implementing comprehensive debt-relief programmes, supporting the efforts of African countries to improve and enhance their financial intermediation capabilities, upgrading infrastructure and participating actively in the promotional activities of African countries;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the President of the African Development Bank and the World Bank Group to continue providing African countries with the technical and financial assistance they need to promote the private sector and private investment;

8. *Calls upon* African member States and regional/subregional organizations to pay particular attention and accord priority to the development of industrial skills, particularly technological, engineering and entrepreneurial capabilities, in national human resource development programmes and to ensure that adequate resources are earmarked for that purpose in national budgets as well as in the technical cooperation programmes of the United Nations Development Programme and other multilateral and bilateral funding agencies;

9. *Urges* African States to pay particular attention to human resources development support institutions and to find ways and means of strengthening research/development and training institutions such as the African Regional Centre for Engineering, Design and Manufacturing, the African Regional Centre for Technology and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning;

10. *Also calls upon* the Commission, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and other international organizations to continue helping African countries in their research/development and training activities by providing technical and financial assistance to subregional and regional institutions such as the African Regional Centre for Engineering, Design and Manufacturing, the African Regional Centre for Technology and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning;

11. *Further calls upon* the Commission and other relevant international organizations, particularly the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organisation to continue to accord high priority to the development of human resources and entrepreneurial capabilities in their technical cooperation and other activities in Africa;

12. *Requests* the secretariats of the Commission, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Organization of African Unity to take necessary measures with a view to establishing an information network on African industrial training institutions;

13. *Further urges* African Governments to formulate policies geared towards increasing the participation of women in industrial development;

14. *Requests* African member States and the private sector to institute incentive measures to check Africa's brain drain and to use and manage local skills rationally;

15. *Calls upon* African Governments to obtain, with the assistance of intellectual property regional offices, adequate facilities for the use of intellectual property as a tool for industrial development and for attracting private investments in

industries; meeting the needs of the economic operators through technical information and the promotion of inventions and technological culture and enhancing the negotiating capacity of African countries regarding contracts on technology;

16. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to undertake follow-up actions for the mobilization of resources at national, subregional and regional levels for industrialization in Africa and jointly submit a biennial report on the matter to the Conference of African Ministers of Industry.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

816 (XXXI). *Enhancement of women's contribution to the implementation of the programme for the second United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1993-2002)*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 47/177 of 22 December 1992 adopting the programme of the second Industrial Development Decade for Africa,

Aware of the need to mobilize African men and women in order to achieve the objectives of the Decade,

Considering the ingenious strategies adopted by women and which enable African families, communities and nations to survive the acute economic crisis caused by indebtedness, structural adjustment and currency devaluation,

Recalling the African Common Position on Women adopted at the fifth African Regional Conference on Women held in Dakar, Senegal in November 1994 in preparation for the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, in September 1995,

Noting that women account for 52 per cent of the continent's human resources,

1. Calls upon African Governments and socio-economic partners to:

(a) Remove the socio-cultural constraints which impede the full involvement of women in the development of Africa;

(b) Sensitize policy, financial and technical decision makers to gender issues in industrial development;

(c) Ensure greater consistency between policy statements and the actual measures taken to promote women in the private sector in Africa;

(d) Incorporate in the industrial policies and strategies of countries, subregional, regional and international organizations strategies and plans of action that address the specific requirements and interests of women;

(e) Recognize and enhance the role of women as producers whose inputs should be considered in national accounting statistics and rewarded with fair remuneration;

(f) Promote access to education including initiation to entrepreneurship, right from the elementary level and the granting of science and technology scholarships to young girls at the secondary and tertiary levels;

(g) Increase short- and long-term training workshops in business creation, management and new technologies;

(h) Facilitate business creation by providing women with information, putting in place technical assistance structures and providing funds for the preparation of project documentation and access to credit;

(i) Promote new services geared to relieving the dual family and professional burden on women working in the industrial sector as business promoters or hired labour;

(j) Strengthen the organizational initiatives of women such as national, subregional and regional associations of women entrepreneurs;

2. Also calls upon the international organizations, particularly the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity to provide support to African countries in their efforts for the promotion of women.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

817 (XXXI). African Regional Conference on Science and Technology

The Conference of Ministers,

Reaffirming its belief in the strategic role and vital contribution of science and technology in the continued activation or acceleration of economic growth and development of African countries,

Recalling the objectives of the Conference, in particular (a) to pursue actively the promotion of science and technology and the formulation of measures to ensure their application to national, subregional and regional development; (b) to give special consideration in its activities to the needs of the least developed member States and to the application and impact of new and emerging technologies,

Recognizing its mandate as an intergovernmental institution dedicated to assist and advise the Economic Commission for Africa in formulating and executing strategies, policies and programmes to stimulate scientific progress and technological innovation on the African continent,

Recognizing also its role in the strengthening of regional and subregional cooperation and integration in the field of science and technology,

Acknowledging that the international environment has changed appreciably during the last few years and that science and technology policies in Africa need to be revamped or adapted to the emerging new context and challenges of the twenty-first century,

Realizing the need to formulate a new vision of Africa as a full and integrated partner in world development,

Bearing in mind the remarkable success of some Asian countries in the field of technological and economic progress and industrial competitiveness, success that can be a source of inspiration and encouragement for African countries,

Reaffirming that capacity-building in science and technology for development in Africa should remain one of the top priority issues on the agenda of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Stressing the need for African countries to promote and facilitate access to and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and know-how,

Noting with concern the diminishing level of development aid and technical assistance in Africa, the short-term negative impacts of the new Uruguay Round/General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the low level of international commercial credit and investment in Africa,

Understanding the imperative for African countries to increase the level of investment in technological application and utilization substantially in order to achieve a growth rate that will enable them to break out of poverty,

Mindful of the need for African countries to depart from protective and inward-looking policies and promote mechanisms that will increase substantially the level of financing for technological development and economic growth,

Noting that to increase the contribution of science and technology and stimulate economic growth, African countries need to pursue economic reforms with more vigour and put into place an enabling environment,

Noting further that a more proactive approach to science and technology development is needed, especially its inextricable link to industrialization,

1. Urges that member States should:

(a) Participate actively and at the highest level of decision-making, including ministerial, in the work of the Conference, ensure its continuity and take steps to implement its resolutions and recommendations;

(b) Set up or review their science and technology policy and machinery and translate these policies into appropriate legislation for their effective application, in line with the new international context characterized, among other things, by a decline of official development aid and technical assistance, high indebtedness, a new trade and investment regime, a greater role of the private sector and private finance, the expansion of market economies, increased economic liberalization, interdependence and globalization;

(c) Put into place an incentives regime to foster scientific progress and technological innovation, including:

(i) fundamental market incentives (competition, private property, openness to the global economy, reduced bureaucracy);

(ii) institutional and infrastructural incentives (information, communication, technology incubation, transfer, extension, diffusion, popularization, networking, export processing zone);

(iii) financial incentives (venture capital, small credit, etc.);

(iv) fiscal incentives (tax exemptions, rebates, reliefs, holidays, accelerated depreciation);

(v) budgetary incentives (modernization grants, investment allowances, etc.);

(vi) legal and regulatory incentives (property rights, technological standards);

(vii) public procurement incentives;

(viii) honorific incentives (prizes, awards); and

(ix) knowledge base incentives (scholarships, encouragement to girls, apprenticeship, sabbatical leaves, study tours, participation in seminars, consultancies, etc.);

(d) Strengthen their technological and financing capacity through, among other things, the use of foreign direct investment which can be attracted by putting in place:

(i) a stable democracy;

(ii) a competitive policy regime that is transparent, predictable and efficiently administered, including trade policy, investment policy, immigration policy, industrial and labour policy and patents and intellectual property policies;

(iv) an adequate physical infrastructure, particularly in transport and communications;

(iv) a reliable network of suppliers;

(v) a sound, diversified and dynamic financial system;

(vi) a good array of technological support services, such as technical training facilities, extension services, standards, meteorology and quality control, science and technology information services (data bases and full Internet connectivity);

(e) Accelerate technology acquisition, absorption and assimilation by:

(i) formulating a clear policy statement on technology transfer to be approved by the highest governmental authorities;

(ii) initiating measures to strengthen manpower training in various aspects of technology transfer;

(iii) designing competitive laws, regulations and guidelines to facilitate the transfer and acquisition of environmentally sound, culturally compatible, socially beneficial, economically profitable and sustainable technologies;

(iv) reducing cultural and political constraints to technology transfer and development, and promoting values of change, openness, self-reliance, initiative, entrepreneurship, freedom and stability;

(f) Create a strong governmental unit to:

(i) design and manage a more discriminating technology transfer and acquisition policy in the direction of the national objectives;

(ii) carry out technology assessment and forecasting;

(iii) support entrepreneurs in their foreign technology transactions;

(iv) advise the government on issues of technology transfer;

(v) evolve concerted and harmonized subregional technology transfer and acquisition policies to make optimal use of resources and enhance a common stand when competing for foreign acquisition of technology;

(vi) ensure the proper use of resources;

(g) Put into place an enabling environment by redoubling their efforts in capacity building so as to be better able to apply international technologies by pursuing structural economic reforms so that they can be more appealing on the international scene, better absorb needed technologies, better exploit technological complementarities among themselves and participate more in the regional and global economy;

(h) Implement urgently policies to curb brain drain and benefit from African nationals working abroad;

(i) Take steps to implement the protocol on science and technology of the African Economic Community by:

- (i) strengthening their scientific and technological capabilities through programmes aiming at the proper application of science and technology;
- (ii) improving existing facilities and developing institutional capabilities for the development, management, utilization and popularization of new and traditional technologies;
- (iii) promoting cooperation in all aspects of fostering the application of science and technology for the development, the acquisition and assimilation of technology and its adaptation to local conditions; and
- (iv) strengthening national, subregional and regional scientific and technological institutions and associations;

(j) Strengthen the acquisition and application of nuclear science and technology in order to improve water resources management, environmental protection, energy requirement, food and agriculture, radiation protection and safety, animal production, human and animal health and quality control and other uses in industry and, to this effect, support the membership of African countries in the International Atomic Energy Agency and the regional cooperation agreement on research, development and training in the field of nuclear science and technology and their participation in the regional programme for Africa and the Working Group on Nuclear Science and Technology of the Economic Commission for Africa, while ensuring complementarity of efforts in the various cooperative frameworks;

(k) Build and periodically update a series of science and technology indicators in order to provide useful information in the design of science and technology policies and to monitor the scientific and technological progress;

(l) Pay special attention to and empower women through their participation in science and technology activities in order to increase productivity and accelerate the process of development;

(m) Intensify the teaching of mathematics, science and technology at primary and secondary levels through appropriate reform of curricula;

(n) Attach more importance to cooperation and collaboration with:

- (i) the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank in the field of science and technology, including the implementation of the Protocol on Science and Technology of the African Economic Community;
- (ii) other intergovernmental and non-governmental technological organizations, including the African Regional Centre for Engineering, Design and Manufacturing, the African Regional Centre for Technology, the African Regional Organization for Standardization, the African Agency for Bio-technology, the African Regional Industrial Property Organization and the African Intellectual Property Organization;

2. Resolves:

(a) To create five subregional conferences on science and technology, with flexible membership, to:

- (i) foster subregional cooperation and integration in science and technology;
- (ii) formulate subregional policies taking into account comparative advantages and complementarities of member States;

(iii) design and implement subregional projects; and

(iv) collaborate in the strengthening of subregional capacity in science and technology;

(v) create sectoral working groups, embracing networking and including one sectoral working group on scientific and technological parks and one sectoral working group on nuclear science and technology;

(b) To give full support to the Commission's activities in science and technology in order to assist member States in incorporating science and technology into their socio-economic development for food security, poverty alleviation and enhanced quality of life, including:

(i) the provision of sample legislation for the implementation of science and technology policies;

(ii) the promotion of measures to enhance entrepreneurial capacity to exploit science and technology;

(iii) the development of science and technology popularization programmes through the mass media;

(iv) the formulation of science and technology policy options for Africa for the twenty-first century; and

(v) the delivery of advisory services to member States on various aspects of science and technology development and application;

(c) To call upon the organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their co-operation with the Commission and assistance to African countries and organizations in promoting the development of science and technology on the continent;

(d) To call upon and support the Commission in its search for funds for the execution of extra-budgetary projects in the priority areas identified by the Conference;

(e) To recommend an amendment to its terms of reference, item (d), to include special attention to the needs of women and children.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

818 (XXXI). *Promotion of mineral resources development and utilization in Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Taking into account the overall objective of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy, which is to promote co-operation among African countries in mineral and energy resources development and utilization in the continent and the underlying theme of the Conference "Policies, strategies and programmes for the enhanced contribution of minerals and energy industries to the socio-economic development of Africa",

Aware of the low rate of implementation of the recommendations/resolutions of the Conference by all the parties involved in the development and utilization of mineral resources in Africa, and recognizing the need to improve the situation,

Noting with concern the paradox existing between the wealth of the continent in terms of mineral resources and the poor socio-economic conditions of the African peoples,

Taking further into account the African Governments' willingness to place the welfare of their people at the centre of sustainable development and that all African States and all African people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Noting that entrepreneurship in many African countries is in its infancy or lacks adequate means to contribute effectively to the development and utilization of mineral and energy resources in Africa,

Recognizing the poor state of development of the African minerals processing industries and the need to strengthen the African countries capabilities and capacities to fully develop their mineral resources, *Recognizing also* the important role of private sector participation in the development of the region's mineral resources,

Taking into consideration the importance of small-scale mining for the socio-economic development of African people, especially in rural areas, and *aware* of the need to improve that sector,

Highly appreciative of the efforts made by member States to strengthen cooperation among themselves in the field of minerals development and utilization and *also recognizing* the need to devise mechanisms for the enhancement of such cooperation,

Further recognizing that African Governments, the United Nations system and other international and intergovernmental organizations and institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other groups are important actors in the process of sustainable development,

1. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa to carry out studies on selected minerals with a view to providing member States with information and data which could be used during the process of the establishment of their mineral development policies, strategies and programmes;

2. *Calls upon* member States to put in place policies, strategies, incentives and instruments (such as capital markets, special funds for research, etc.) to encourage especially local entrepreneurs to participate more effectively in the development of mineral resources;

3. *Urges* member States to adopt policies which will encourage further processing of their minerals in order to derive greater benefits out of added value with other associated benefits such as employment creation and more intensive use of minerals;

4. *Recommends* that the Commission should carry out studies on:

(a) Privatization as it impinges on the development of the minerals industries in Africa; and

(b) African macroeconomic frameworks as they affect the performance of the minerals industries of the continent;

5. *Also recommends* that member States should place emphasis on the establishment of national electronic data bases on mineral resources development and utilization with a view to linking them in the future in order to facilitate easy access to each other's information and data on mineral commodities;

6. *Requests* the Commission to carry out studies on the standardization of formats of the electronic data bases in order to make networking possible and compatible;

7. *Also requests* the Commission to commission a team of experts to carry out a study on the various models and necessary instruments for the promotion of small-scale mining;

8. *Further requests* the Commission, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, to convene a meeting of subregional economic groupings with a view to discussing and agreeing on the creation within these groupings of mechanisms that would promote cooperation in minerals sectors and formulate an agreement on this matter;

9. *Urges* member States to harmonize and coordinate regionally supportive mineral development policies, strategies and programmes;

10. *Recommends* that the Commission, in collaboration with the African Development Bank, should continue, on recurrent basis, the compilation of the directory of African experts in minerals and energy sectors;

11. *Urges* the Commission to assist member States in preparation of appropriate investment codes in the mineral and energy sectors in the negotiations with prospective investors in these sectors;

12. *Proposes* that a decade be proclaimed for the development of minerals industries in Africa, and in this regard, recommends that the Commission, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, member States, relevant international organizations, African intergovernmental institutions and other institutions to establish a programme for the decade to be submitted for consideration by the next session of the Regional Conference;

13. *Calls upon* the United Nations Secretary-General to take all necessary steps to strengthen the Commission's department responsible for mineral resources development and utilization by

providing adequate financial and human resources in order to enable this agency to fulfil its mandate;

14. Also calls upon member States, the intergovernmental organizations and the Commission to pursue the implementation of recommendations/-resolutions of the fifth Regional Conference, especially with regard to recommendations on the protection of environment against the adverse effects of mining, human resources development and intra-African subregional cooperation and integration in the field of mineral resources development and utilization;

15. Recommends that African countries should enhance their cooperation and integration in the field of mineral resources development by giving priority to multinational programmes and projects.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

819 (XXXI). *Promotion of energy resources development and utilization in Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Taking into account the overall objective of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy which is to formulate and promote policies, strategies and programmes for a greater contribution of mineral and energy resources to socio-economic development in Africa by the year 2020,

Taking further into account the fact that sustainable economic development is impossible without the rational utilization and development of energy resources on a sustainable basis,

Considering that Africa possesses considerable conventional and renewable energy resources and that energy resources to date have contributed little to development in general and rural development in particular in Africa,

Realizing that energy is a critical input for the development and transformation of rural areas where the majority of the Africa's population lives,

Further recognizing that governments, the private sector, non-governmental and other groups are important actors in the process of sustainable development of energy resources and considering the importance of reforms under way to optimize the role of these actors for the development of the sector,

Realizing that in order to achieve sustainable economic development and the transformation of rural communities, it is necessary to increase dramatically the level of energy services accessible to and to be enjoyed by all sections of society especially the poor,

Recognizing also that energy development should be geared for the alleviation of rural poverty by providing appropriate energy sources for productive economic activities,

Taking into consideration the Lagos Plan of Action for the economic development of Africa, the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and the resolutions of various conferences regarding the need for the coordination and the integration of energy activities at the subregional and regional levels,

Recognizing that sustainable development and exploitation of energy resources should take into account the preservation of the environment for Africa's future generations,

A. Policies and strategies

1. Recommends that African States should continue to formulate and implement coherent energy strategies and policies that will enhance greater contribution of energy to socio-economic development which emphasizes regional and subregional cooperation, drawing upon the valuable experiences gained in various subregional and regional institutions;

2. Urges African States to tailor their energy policies and strategies to meet the specific needs and aspirations of their populations, in particular the gender dimensions, for their socio-economic betterment, especially of the rural populations;

3. Recommends that African States should establish energy conservation and efficiency programmes as an important element of their energy policies and strategies;

4. Urges African States to establish appropriate legal, fiscal, financial incentives and establish appropriate credit mechanisms and physical infrastructure to facilitate access to energy , including new and renewable sources of energy, by low-income consumers to meet their energy needs; and

5. Calls upon African States to pursue subregional and regional cooperation and interconnections of their energy systems whenever and wherever viable;

B. Private sector participation and deregulation

6. Urges African States to initiate concrete actions which include, inter alia, sectoral reforms, and participation of the private sector by creating the necessary conducive and enabling environment for the optimal operation of the energy sector, in order to improve efficiency, production and supply of energy;

7. Urges also African States to encourage sectoral reforms to allow their energy institutions greater autonomy in order to make them competitive;

C. Poverty alleviation

8. Urges African States to establish and strengthen specialized government agencies, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, to handle rural electrification and increase supply of energy;

9. Recommends that African States should develop their new and renewable energy and increase productive activities with a view to alleviating poverty;

10. Calls upon African States to initiate at the regional and subregional levels the local manufacturing of turbines and generators for mini hydropower as well as the setting up of manufacturing plants for equipment to utilize renewable energy resources in order to increase access to energy in the rural areas and achieve sustainable rural electrification programmes;

11. Urges African countries to formulate innovative mechanisms for providing financial and technical assistance to small- and medium-scale energy users in the industrial and agricultural sectors in accessing energy and the related equipment and appliances;

D. Cooperation and integration

12. Recommends that the African Energy Commission initially and provisionally should be established as a loose body serviced jointly by existing institutional capacity in the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity, the African Development Bank and the subregional economic groupings, until the time is opportune for the creation of the African Energy Commission;

13. Urges African States to promote solidarity through the development of regional cooperation, the exchange of information and experiences, the coordination of programmes and the exploitation of complementary energies which exist in most African subregions, together with the sharing of technological innovations and management;

14. Calls upon the Economic Commission for Africa and other African organizations to establish energy networks for the exchange of information on the development and utilization of energy resources in general and new and renewable energy resources in particular;

15. Requests the President of the African Development Bank to continue the implementation of the African energy programme and to strengthen the organ which is responsible for energy matters.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

820 (XXXI). *Organization of a meeting on economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the extraordinary session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade which met in Addis Ababa from 14 to 17 December 1990 and adopted the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and beyond,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 47/183 of 22 December 1992 on the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Reaffirming the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on technical cooperation among developing countries of September 1978, the Caracas Action Plan on economic cooperation among developing countries of the Group of 77 of May 1981, the Teheran Declaration of the Group of 77 of November 1991, the Cartagena Commitment of February 1992, the Declaration of the sixteenth annual meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 of October

1992, the Joint Communiqué of the third meeting of the Summit Level Group for South-South Consultations and Cooperation of November 1992,

Referring to the twelfth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade held in Tunis from 22 to 24 October 1993,

Mindful of the importance of South-South trade and cooperation,

Further convinced that with the internalization of production and financial markets, the rapid evolution of technology in global production and trade, the developing countries have no alternative to economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries to participate in the new international trading system effectively,

Noting that the developing countries have successfully established institutional arrangements to foster their economic cooperation,

Bearing in mind that many pronouncements in the past regarding institutional arrangements and meetings on economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries have so far failed to bring about the expected momentum in economic cooperation among developing countries,

Mindful that the lack of coordination between development institutions, government agencies, the regional economic communities, subregional business organizations and the private economic operators from developing countries in the mobilization of locally available resources especially at a time when resources from developed countries to Africa are shrinking;

Convinced that identification and implementation of substantial and concrete economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries programmes for development can meaningfully contribute to expansion of trade among developing countries,

1. Welcomes the proposal by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa to organize a meeting bringing together United Nations regional commissions and relevant specialized agencies, development banks of developing countries, subregional economic communities and countries which are not yet members of any subregional economic community, business organizations, African regional and subregional specialized institutions, centres of excellence on South-South cooperation, research and scientific centres and other organizations and personalities concerned with economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries with a view to providing a framework of action and to identifying and formulating specific economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries projects as a significant breakthrough in the history of South-South cooperation and the best way forward out of the prevailing difficult socio-economic situation;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to proceed with the organization of the conference within a thoroughly worked out framework;

3. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to act as focal point and take lead in drawing up a work programme, associate other United Nations regional commissions, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the President of the African Development Bank as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in implementing this proposal;

4. Calls upon the Executive Secretary of the Commission to work out a programme of action carefully, including seminars and workshops so as to sensitize African officials on economic cooperation among developing countries/technical cooperation among developing countries programmes;

5. Invites the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, multilateral and bilateral donors to favourably consider financing the conference and related programmes;

6. Calls upon member States to participate fully in the launching of the proposed conference as soon as possible.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

821 (XXXI). *Eight-year intra-African trade development action plan*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the extraordinary session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade which met in Addis Ababa from 14 to 17 December 1990 and adopted the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and beyond,

Recalling also the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community adopted by the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government in Abuja, Nigeria in June 1991,

Noting with concern the low level of intra-African trade,

Aware of the importance of intra-African trade in regional economic integration and of its role as the mainstay of Africa's development,

Further aware of the need for production and market diversification through increased investment levels and the building and utilization of adequate human, institutional and infrastructural capacities,

1. Endorses the Plan of Action for the development of intra-African trade as proposed by the Economic Commission for Africa;

2. Calls upon African countries to fully support and implement the eight-year Plan of Action for the development of intra-African trade;

3. Further calls upon the chief executives of regional business organizations: the Economic Commission for Africa, the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations, the African Economic Community, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, subregional economic groupings, the World Tourism Organization, the World Bank, national investment and trade development centres and the African Development Bank to cooperate and coordinate efforts in the implementation of the Plan of Action;

4. Also calls upon the United Nations Development Programme, multilateral and bilateral donor agencies to support the Plan of Action and provide resources for the funding of related programmes.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

822 (XXXI). *Implementation of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community: Strengthening regional economic communities; rationalization and harmonization of the activities of regional and subregional communities*

The Conference of Ministers,

Considering the entry into force on 12 May 1994 of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community,

Further considering the urgent need for accelerating the integration process given the development challenges facing the continent in the context of the globalization of the world economy, the establishment and consolidation of regional and subregional economic blocs in the developed countries and the prospects provided by the outcome of the Uruguay Round Negotiations,

Recalling that the first phase of the implementation of the Abuja Treaty concerns the strengthening of the regional communities, considered as the building blocks and instruments for achieving the objectives of the African Economic Community,

Considering also that there is the need for rationalization of economic cooperation and integration in the subregional economic spaces as defined under the Abuja Treaty, and mindful of the inadequacy of financial resources required for the achievement of their objectives,

Noting the poor results so far realized by the process of rationalizing the institutional mechanisms of those economic cooperation and integration organizations,

Considering the need to remove the obstacles caused by the existence of several treaties within the same region, particularly in the area of trade liberalization,

Aware of the limitation of the system of direct contributions from the national budgets of member States as a means of financing the integration process, and of the need to render the integration process more credible and irreversible,

1. Urges member States that have not ratified the Abuja Treaty to do so as a matter of urgency;

2. Stresses the need for every African country to become a member of a regional or subregional community;

3. Requests member States, the regional and subregional communities to:

(a) Urgently institute a programme for the rationalization and harmonization of community trade policies through the unification of trade liberalization instruments within each regional space, in particular those relating to:

(i) the elimination of tariff barriers;

(ii) rules of origin;

(iii) certificates of origin;

(iv) compensation mechanisms; and

(v) tariff and statistical nomenclatures;

(b) Sustain and strengthen the regional integration process by adopting appropriate measures for the institution of common external tariffs, domestic taxation and pricing policies susceptible of providing African products a competitive edge in their own markets;

(c) Promote and encourage the participation of the private sector in the integration process;

(d) Design and implement self-financing mechanisms that will enable the regional and subregional communities to secure adequate and regular financing of the African economic integration process;

4. Further requests member States and the regional and subregional communities to design and implement appropriate activities for the harmonization of other sectoral integration policies;

5. Invites the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the President of the African Development Bank to assist the regional and subregional communities in the implementation of the programme for the rationalization and the design of self-financing mechanisms for the integration process, in particular through the conduct of the required substantive studies;

6. Requests the United Nations Development Programme and other donors and funding agencies to contribute to the financing of studies and activities identified for the implementation of this programme;

7. Welcomes the progress made by some regional communities in the implementation of their programmes and exhorts them to speed up the integration process;

8. Invites the Joint Organization of African Unity/Economic Commission for Africa/African Development Bank Secretariat to do its utmost to provide a dynamic catalyst for and proper coordination of the activities of the regional and subregional economic communities;

9. Calls upon the Joint Organization of African Unity/Economic Commission for Africa/-African Development Bank Secretariat on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty to expedite the process of preparation of the protocols to be annexed to the Treaty.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

823 (XXXI). *Development of tourism in Africa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Considering issues regarding the development of tourism in Africa at regional and subregional levels,

Considering also the growing importance of tourism in socio-economic and cultural development as well as in the regional integration process,

1. Adopts the following arrangements to facilitate the rational and effective utilization of tourism resources in Africa:

A. At the regional level

(a) Establishment of tourism development poles through the creation of staging points for the concentration and redistribution of tourism traffic flows in a subregion;

(b) Grouping (within the context of the 1987 Kinshasa Declaration on African Tourism) under one African regional federation/pan-African organization for the joint promotion of tourism, subregional machinery for the joint promotion of destination Africa and establishing inter-State and intra-African circuits based on the complementarily of tourism products and the use of intra-African cooperation and regional integration structures;

(c) Establishment of tertiary infrastructures on the tourism sites and centres of interest and encouraging integration and participation of the people by making a significant consumption of the cultural and natural resources of the sites;

(d) Establishment of tourism products based on tested traditional components but also diversifying them by integrating new components such as thematic tourism and eco-tourism and based on the attributes and unique resources of the different countries;

(e) Facilitation, through legislation, of the emergence of a motivated and competent African private sector constituting the privileged partner of national tourism administrations in the definition of policies and playing a vanguard role in the promotional and tourism products management activities. Government authorities will also take measures enabling the participation of foreign investors and users within the framework of partnership policies between them and the users of tourism resources;

(f) Establishment of systems for the development of human resources for tourism trades and conducive to the emergence of tourism conception and management cadres;

(g) Development of policies closely associating tourism exploitation, conservation, development and use/management of national and human environments;

(h) Marketing based on a sound knowledge of tourism development objectives for the country, a sharp knowledge of the aspirations of the national, African and foreign consumers and taking into account the socio-cultural and environmental effects;

(i) Ratification and implementation by member States of various conventions, treaties and protocols related to free movement of people and services with a view to enhancing the development of intra-African and interregional tourism in Africa;

(j) Improvement of air transport services between the different countries of the region, including the granting of extended rights for scheduled flights and charter flights;

B. At the subregional level

(a) North African subregion

(i) reactivation of subregional cooperation in tourism and the priority establishment of a mechanism either within the Arab Maghreb Union or autonomously a subregional tourism cooperation and integration structure. Pursuant to the directives of the Conference of African Ministers of Tourism, the establishment/reactivation of the "regional organization of North African tourism" grouping Algeria, Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, the Sudan and Tunisia is proposed;

(ii) establishment, within the framework of that organization, of a mechanism for cooperation between the vocational training centres and the recognition of diplomas issued by the training institutions of the subregion;

(iii) establishment of Maghreb and North African inter-State tourism circuits aimed at enhancing cooperation and promoting intra-African tourism and free movement of nationals of these countries and other African countries;

(iv) establishment of "North Africa" stands during marketing activities in external markets and organization of meetings between tourism professionals of the subregion;

(v) measures to facilitate tourist travels and stays, including immigration, national currencies, transport and communications;

(b) West African subregion

(i) improvement of tourism research and promotion tools through the organization, on a subregional basis, of seminars on tourism statistical data;

(ii) establishment of inter-State circuits encompassing the products of coastal and land-locked countries.

The marketing programmes will be carried out jointly with a preponderant participation of operators. Changing the International Handicraft Exhibition of Ouagadougou into the "International Handicraft and Hotel Equipment Exhibition of Ouagadougou", as recommended at the Seminar on Tourism and Handicraft organized by the International Handicraft Exhibition of Ouagadougou in 1994;

(iii) establishment of a permanent Economic Community of West African States tourism and leisure fair as decided by its Council of Ministers at its session of 3 July 1991;

(iv) promotion of small- and medium-scale tourism enterprises with technical assistance for vocational training and laying down of concrete incentives for the emergence of African operators and their foreign partners;

(v) improvement of air transport services between the different countries of the subregion, including the granting of extended rights for scheduled flights and charter flights;

(vi) enhancement of inter-State cooperation for the harmonization and integration of tourism development policies and programmes with a view to establishing a single space;

(vii) implementation of the following measures at the Community level:

a. promotion of Community projects in training, accommodation promotion and marketing of tourism products and the promotion of national and youth tourism;

b. harmonization of the classification standards for hotels and other types of accommodation, including facilitating measures, harmonizing travel and tourism statistical methods and concepts;

(c) Central African subregion

(i) preparation of the post-conflict period, for some countries, by rehabilitating, in the urban centres and, as far as possible, the reception infrastructures. These establishments will be the basis for the recovery of the industry and in the meantime will offer reception centres for investors and visitors within the framework of general restaurant operations;

(ii) promotion of small- and medium-scale tourism enterprise including incentives, training and technical assistance given to the professionals of the sectors;

(iii) establishment of cooperation and joint promotion mechanisms at the subregional level like the tourism organization in Central Africa. The subregional organizations for cooperation and integration could provide a provisional basis for the establishment of such a structure;

(iv) promotion of inter-State circuits by facilitating joint ventures;

(v) concrete measures to improve the movement of persons in the subregion and other parts of Africa: more flights linking the land-locked countries to the best connected countries, facilitation of travels and stays;

(d) East African subregion

(i) strengthening cooperation among States of the subregion, and institutions working towards development cooperation and integration, including the formulation of common programmes for the harnessing of resources, development of facilitation measures, exchange of expertise, joint promotion and the establishment of inter-State circuits;

(ii) strengthening, at national level, community participation in the development and management of national level community participation, including the elaboration of concrete measures for the exploitation of wildlife;

(iii) diversification of products with more attention being focused on cultural resources and social environment while maintaining control of the negative impact that might result therefrom;

(iv) establishment in the northern region of a tourism cooperation and integration mechanism and a network of inter-State circuits;

(v) enlistment of the active participation of promoters of tourism in formulating measures to facilitate tourism with a view to promoting intra-African tourism;

(vi) creation of a common tourism destination pole enhancing insular and continental products;

(e) Southern African subregion

(i) strengthening of subregional cooperation as a step towards pan-African integration. The regional tourism organization in Southern Africa should be considered as a milestone towards the establishment of vaster entities as defined in the Abuja Treaty;

(ii) development of intra-African tourism by facilitating the free movement of goods and persons and the establishment of small- and medium-scale business;

(iii) development of human resources and horizontal cooperation;

(iv) diversification of tourism products and creation of inter-State circuits;

(v) development and management of natural resources (wildlife and nature) and cultural and social heritage for a sustainable and sustained development of tourism and for an active participation of the local population;

(vi) promotion of small- and medium-scale national businesses;

C. Tourism and African integration

(a) Promotion of intra-African tourism;

(b) Promotion of inter-State circuits;

(c) Establishment of tourism products inspired by African cultural and natural heritage;

(d) Establishment of cooperation mechanisms at the level of policies and development activities including cooperation between professionals;

(e) Joint promotion of African tourism products and the establishment of attractive African travel destinations;

(f) Measures for facilitation of tourism travels and stays in Africa including the free movement of persons and goods in Africa;

(g) Implementation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/World Tourism Organization Slave Route Project Declaration adopted by the eleventh session of the World Tourism Organization in Cairo, Egypt, in October 1995 with the view to promoting tourism in Africa as is being done by the Eastern European countries together with some of the Western European nations with the "silk route project";

(h) Pooling of resources available for tourism development, including the establishment of professional training institutions and recognition of diplomas issued in the national tourism training institutions which will accept to enter the system;

(i) Elaboration of a protocol on the development of the tourism sector in Africa as an annex to the Abuja Treaty. Member States are requested to participate in the preparation of this document by conveying their suggestions to the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa at the earliest opportunity;

(j) Organization of the African tourism fair: The secretariats of the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa are mandated to constitute the organizing committee to be composed of technical experts from the tourism divisions of the African regional economic communities in accordance with the principle of geographical balance to plan and organize the second African tourism fair in collaboration with the European Union, the World Tourism Organization and other internationally identified bodies;

D. General arrangements

(a) Establishment, where this is not already the case, of autonomous government departments concerned specifically with the tourism sector;

(b) Strengthening of the tourism unit of the Commission to enhance its effectiveness in addressing the increasing needs of member States in the area of technical assistance;

(c) Allocation by governments of credit lines on the national budgets to speed up the development of tourism. The African Development Bank should include loans for tourism development in its lending portfolio. This would minimize the dependence on external sources of funding for tourism development programmes;

2. Requests the Economic Commission for Africa to convene a meeting of ministers of tourism, transport, aviation including concerned international, national organizations and associations in view to enhancing the contribution of air transport to the promotion and development of tourism in Africa;

3. Further requests the Commission to undertake:

(a) A study, in cooperation with the World Trade Organization, on the implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services on tourism development in Africa;

(b) A concertation, in cooperation with the European Union, with a view to harmonizing the contractual relations between the European tourism operators and their African partners mainly regarding the business relation for tourism services;

E. Follow up

4. Also requests the Commission to make all the necessary efforts, within its mandate, to facilitate the implementation of these arrangements, and to extend the necessary technical assistance to member States, subregional organizations as well as the relevant professional bodies and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of programmes connected with those arrangements;

5. Requests the secretariat of the Commission to report thereon, on a regular basis, to the legislative organs of the Commission.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

824 (XXXI). *Follow-up to Dakar and Beijing Conferences: Implementation of the Global and Regional Platforms for Action for the advancement of women*

The Conference of Ministers,

Noting with satisfaction that the African and Global Platforms for Action are a positive synthesis of national perspectives and priorities which are an indispensable strategy for committed and concerted action at the national, subregional, regional and international levels for the accelerated achievement of their development target in the 1990s and beyond,

Aware of the imperative and implications of resource mobilization of all available human, technical materials, physical and financial resources nationally, regionally and internationally,

Conscious of the importance of continuous sensitization aimed at securing commitment for concrete action,

Recalling Commission resolution 802 (XXX) of 3 May 1995 concerning the African Platform for Action: African Common Position for the Advancement of Women and the Addis Ababa Declaration on the Dakar African Platform for Action on Women adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity,[8]

1. Urges African ministers to sensitize their respective governments about the need to continue to promote the implementation of the Regional and Global Platforms for Action;

2. Urges:

(a) The Organization of African Unity, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to play a strong coordinating and catalytic role in the implementation of the Platforms for Action at the regional level;

(b) Subregional organizations to set up machineries to facilitate their implementation role;

(c) Governments to create, upgrade or strengthen, as necessary, national machineries in positions where they have the capacity and political clout to influence policies and programmes, and to monitor and coordinate the implementation process;

3. Requests the Economic Commission for Africa to:

(a) Establish a data bank on national experiences on women, gender and development and disseminate the information for possible replication where necessary and involve eminent persons from Africa in campaigns for the implementation of the Global and Regional Platforms for Action;

(b) Re-dynamize the activities of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres, particularly by allocating sufficient resources to facilitate the coordination of gender programmes in the subregions;

4. Requests the Bureau of the fifth African Regional Conference on Women, in collaboration and consultation with the Commission and the Organization of African Unity to play a complementary advocacy role in the implementation of the Platforms for Action;

5. Recommends to governments that mainstreaming gender in all sectors of national programmes should be the strategy for implementing the Global and Regional Platforms for Action and as such, all ministries, particularly those with responsibilities for women's affairs, should include elements of the Platforms within their sectors and allocate the necessary resources for their implementation;

6. Recommends also to governments and all development actors that in the search for resources for the implementation of the Platforms, competition should be avoided by instituting new fora for consultations between governments and non-government organizations, and as new sources of financing are identified, all development actors should take action to reduce waste of resources in such activities as multiplicity of meetings, mismanagement of public funds, etc.;

7. Urges the Commission to:

(a) Set up a multidisciplinary group of experts to prepare a comprehensive report on the impact of debt and structural adjustment programmes on women and the feasibility of relief measures that have already been proposed; and

(b) Create a forum for sharing women's long-term vision and ideas on the community and development within the context of globalization;

8. Urges also governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and all development actors to ensure scientific and technical literacy for all women and men so that they can use it effectively to meet their basic needs; to foster equal access by women and men to advanced training in science and technology in order to facilitate pursuit of careers as technologists, scientists, engineers, etc., to promote equal access to information and knowledge which women and men can use to improve their standard of living and quality of life; and to ensure gender equity within science and technology institutions including policy and decision-making bodies.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

825 (XXXI). *Decoration of the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa*

The Conference of Ministers,

Noting with satisfaction that the construction of the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa has been completed,

Welcoming the fact that the Centre has become operational,

Recalling that the secretariat has proposed that the Centre should be decorated in a manner that would reflect the rich cultural heritage of Africa,

1. Appeals to member States to support the decoration project and to designate artists who would participate in the design and coordination of the decoration project;

2. Exhorts member States to contribute generously towards the decoration of the Centre.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

B. *Decisions*

DEC.1 (XXXI). *Decision on the replacement of members of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) Governing Council*

The Conference of Ministers decided that effective 1 January 1997, the composition of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Planning and Development shall be as follows:

(a) North African subregion: the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia;

(b) West African subregion: Guinea, Nigeria and Togo;

(c) Central African subregion: the Central African Republic, the Congo and Rwanda;

(d) Eastern and Southern African subregion: Ethiopia, Malawi and Swaziland.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

DEC.2 (XXXI). *Decision on sharpening the objectives and long-term goal of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development*

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling its resolution 621 (XXII) of 24 April 1987 adopting the Constitution of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development,

Aware of its resolution 651 (XXIII) of 15 April 1988 on the scale of contribution to the regular budget of the Centre,

Mindful of its resolution 741 (XXVII) of 22 April 1992 and decision 2 (XXV) of 2 May 1994 on the work programme and budget of the Centre for 1992-1994 and 1994-1996 respectively,

Also recalling resolution 755 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993, regarding the terms of membership of the Board of Governors of the Centre,

Also aware of the relevant resolutions and report on the rationalization and harmonization of institutions sponsored by the Economic Commission for Africa,

Having noted the report of the eighth meeting of the Centre, held in Niamey, the Niger, from 27 to 29 March 1996,

I

OBJECTIVES AND GOAL

1. Decides:

(a) To refocus the medium-term objectives and long-term goal of the Centre's programme to make it better respond to the evolving socio-economic needs of member States;

Long-term goal of the Centre's programme

(b) The Centre shall act as the weather and climate watch institution for Africa by providing:

(i) African countries with regular continental medium- to long-range meteorological and climate prediction;

(ii) regional early warnings on drought, tropical cyclones and other extreme weather and climate events;

(c) The Centre shall act as the African centre of excellence for meteorological applications for sustainable development by:

(i) building capacities for cross-sectoral activities for meteorological application for sustainable social and economic development at the national level. This includes strengthening and broadening national meteorological services and improving communication infrastructure in order to maximize cost-benefit and optimize the utilization of climate and meteorological information and products;

(ii) developing methodologies and techniques for application at the national and subregional levels;

(iii) strengthening Africa's participation in global climate and weather watch programmes;

(iv) providing specialized training to relevant professionals and development practitioners in Africa; and

(v) maintaining appropriate research facilities, networking capacities and regional data bank and making them available to research programmes in the region;

Medium-term objectives

(vi) producing products that will satisfy the requirements of member States and complement those of national meteorological services and increase their effectiveness and impact;

(vii) assisting in developing and strengthening the capacity of national meteorological services to become broad-based and cross-sectoral, interacting regularly with the ultimate users including government departments and other non-government users; and

(viii) participating in the global weather and climate programmes for the benefit of member States;

II

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2. Also decides to establish a Scientific Advisory Committee of the Board of Governors. The Committee shall be the principal body to advise the Board on scientific matters related to the Centre's activities and will, with a view to providing proposals and recommendations to the Board, perform the following functions:

(a) Ensure that the scientific content of programmes and products of the Centre meets the regional requirements and standards for achieving the medium- and long-term objectives of the Centre by:

(i) reviewing and evaluating the Centre's products and services, taking into account the set objectives of the Centre's programme and the expressed requirements users;

(ii) advising on the type of scientific infrastructure required to produce the Centre's products;

(iii) reviewing the requirements for scientific staff of the Centre, taking into consideration the activities to be carried out by the Centre's programme and providing guidelines for the recruitment of senior scientific staff;

(iv) making periodic scientific reviews with the Director-General to help him/her keep within the objectives of the Centre's programme;

(b) Review the objectives of the Centre in the light of emerging economic and scientific developments or any other new scientific issues that are likely to contribute to enhancing the activities of the Centre's programme;

(c) Review the responses of the principal users of the Centre's products and services with a view to better satisfy their needs and review the list of users periodically;

(d) Develop a mechanism for determining users' needs and for assessing benefits realized through the use of the Centre's products and services;

(e) Follow up scientific developments in the areas relevant to the Centre's programme activities;

(f) Examine with immediate effect and streamline the programme's activities and identify additional staff requirements for the next three years, beginning in 1997, taking into account the objectives and outputs (products) of the Centre's programme;

3. Further decides that the Scientific Advisory Committee shall be composed of seven eminent scientists selected in their personal capacity by the Centre's Board of Governors for a term of four years and the membership will be renewed by 50 per cent every two years. One of the members of the Committee shall be proposed by the Centre's partners. The Director General of the Centre will assume the secretariat of the Committee;

III

WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR MAY 1996 - APRIL 1998

4. Endorses the Centre's programme of work and budget for the biennium May 1996 - April 1998 as proposed by the eighth session of the Board of Governors (Niamey, Niger, 27-29 March 1996) refocusing the Centre's objectives and goal on:

(a) Regional (African) meteorological and climate watch and prediction; and

(b) Meteorological applications and climate services with related capacity building, including networking and infrastructure development and strengthening at the national (member countries) level;

IV

STATUTORY MATTERS

A. Membership of the Board of Governors

5. Further decides, in view of the launching of the Centre's programme demonstration period (1996-1997), to extend the membership of the present Board for another two years, until May 1998;

B. Scale of contribution to the recurrent budget of the Centre

6. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, in close collaboration with the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Director-General of the Centre, to review the scale of contribution to the regular budget of the Centre with a view to updating it;

7. Also decides that the present scale of financial contribution will remain in force until after the results of the review exercise when the new scales come into force, and that the contributions begin with the year of ratification of the Constitution of the Centre by the member State concerned;

8. Updates the annual contributions of member States taking into account the admission of Eritrea, Namibia and South Africa which were not members of the Commission at the time the Centre was established (April 1987), using, while waiting for the update, the present percentage scale as follows:

Country	Percentage	Contribution (in $US)
Eritrea	0.65	6,500
Namibia	1.08	10,800
South Africa	8.00	80,000

C. Staff rules

9. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in close collaboration with the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Director-General of the Centre, to review the staff rules of the Centre with a view to updating them in light of the evolution of the Centre's programme and its working environment;

V

CONCLUSION

10. Requests the Commission, through its Niamey-based Multinational Programming and Operational Centre, to continue to assist in the financial administration of the Centre until the resources are available for the recruitment of the appropriate staff;

11. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization to report to the Conference of Ministers at its next meeting on the implementation of this decision.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

DEC.3 (XXXI). *Revitalization and strengthening of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women*

The Conference of Ministers,

Determined to implement the recommendations of the Regional and the Global Platforms for Action for the advancement of women,

Mindful of the importance of effective coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process, and the imperative to strengthen the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee in order to execute its coordinating and evaluation role in the implementation process at the regional level,

Decides to introduce the following modifications in the composition of the membership of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee:

(a) That the Niamey Multinational Programming and Operational Centre subregion will have four instead of three countries as members of the Committee;

(b) That the Lusaka Multinational Programming and Operational Centre subregion will have six instead of three countries as members of the Committee;

(c) That the country chairing the African Regional Conference on Women would become a member of the Bureau of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee until the next African Regional Conference;

(d) That the Economic Commission for Africa defines clearly and precisely the criteria for membership in the subregional and regional Bureaux of the Committee;

(e) That the Commission establishes the principles for rotating the members of the Bureaux in conformity with the rules and regulations of the United Nations;

(f) That the Commission carries out periodic evaluation exercises of the performance of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee at the subregional levels.

301st meeting,
8 May 1996.

1. E/ECA/CM.22/2.

2. E/ECA/CM.22/3.

3. JIU/REP/95/12.

4. JIU/REP/95/12.

5. E/ECA/CM.22/11/Add.2.

6. AHG/Decl. 2 (XXXI).

CHAPTER V

FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION/TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

115. The thirty-first session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa/twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning was held at the new United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 6 to 8 May 1996. The Conference convened under the theme: "Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa".

116. The Conference was formally opened by His Excellency Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a message which was read to the Conference. Statements were delivered by Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, H.E. Mr. Vijay Makhan, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, H.E. Mr. Yasushi Kurokouchi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan, special guest of the Commission at this session, and H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation of Ethiopia and Outgoing Chairman of the thirtieth session of the Commission. H.E. Mr. Adan Noor, Assistant Minister in the Office of the Vice-President and Ministry of Planning and National Development of Kenya, moved a vote of thanks.

117. The session unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Aleke K. Banda, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning and Development of Malawi, as Chairman. He was assisted in a bureau composed of H.E. Mr. Victor L. Selormey, Deputy Minister of Finance of Ghana, H.E. Mr. Innocent A. Ateba, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cameroon and H.E. Mr. Ali Hamdi, Minister of Planning of Algeria.

118. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States of the Commission: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, *Djibouti*, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

119. Observers from the following Member States of the United Nations were present: Austria, Belgium, China, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

120. The Holy See was also represented.

121. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank (ADB), United Nations departments, organs and specialized agencies as well as several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including ECA-sponsored institutions, participated in the meetings.

122. There was a panel discussion on the Framework Agenda on Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa during the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole on 2 May 1996, and a High-level Forum on Public expenditure and the poor in Africa during the Conference of Ministers on 7 May 1996.

123. The Conference expressed its appreciation and full support for the renewal process underway at the Commission under the leadership of the Executive Secretary. It endorsed ECA's new programme orientation which would concentrate on five major themes, namely facilitating economic and social policy analysis; ensuring food security and sustainable development; strengthening development management; harnessing information for development; and promoting regional cooperation and integration; and two cross-cutting issues of gender and capacity building. It affirmed that the priority themes in the new strategic directions of ECA were very relevant to Africa's development

challenges. The Conference emphasized that a renewed ECA would serve as a credible and active voice as well as a facilitator in Africa's development.

124. For their part, the representatives of Africa's development partners welcomed ECA's renewal and restructuring process. They appreciated the efforts that the Commission was devoting to renew itself in order to serve Africa better. They welcomed the process of rationalization of the Commission's operations, its efforts to become more cost-effective and impact-oriented as well as to develop effective partnerships. They indicated that these reforms were long overdue. They commended the Commission for integrating gender issues in its new strategic vision and for its commitment to strengthen the African Centre for Women. They commended ECA for taking the lead among organizations of the United Nations system, and embarking on reforms.

125. Several participants expressed the view that the Multinational Programming and Operational Centers (MULPOCs) should be strengthened to serve member States better. In this respect, they urged ECA to ensure that the directors and professional staff posted to the MULPOCS were of high calibre. They recommended the allocation of additional financial resources to the MULPOCs, with a view to increasing the visibility and impact of the Commission at subregional levels.

126. The Conference reviewed the current economic and social situation in Africa and prospects for 1996. It noted that the African economy grew by 2.3 per cent in 1995, which reflected a consolidation of the modest recovery that began in 1994, when regional output grew by 2.1 per cent. The Conference noted the forecasted growth of 2.9 per cent for 1996.

127. The Conference noted the efforts made by African countries to cope with the problems of sluggish economic performance and an increasingly competitive external environment. It was observed that several countries had embarked upon programmes of socio-economic policy reforms and structural adjustment. The main elements of the reforms that were being implemented included the tightening of fiscal and monetary policies; macroeconomic stabilization; the promotion of a greater role for the private sector in economic development; privatization of public enterprises; the downsizing of public administration; and external trade liberalization. Those reforms had, in many cases, resulted in sustained improvements in rates of economic growth in the countries concerned.

128. Participants further noted that some countries were either in the process of formulating or implementing medium-term national development plans or long-term strategic visions for development to provide a longer-term framework within which their short-term policy reforms and structural adjustments were situated. Many governments had taken measures to protect the vulnerable segments of society, with a view to minimizing the social cost of reforms.

129. Recognizing the importance of a conducive political environment for sustained economic growth and development, the Conference noted with interest the processes of political reform underway in various countries, leading to the establishment of civilian-led good governance and democratic pluralism.

130. The Conference welcomed the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa. They noted that the thrust of the Special Initiative coincided with the Cairo Agenda for Action as well as with the strategic directions of ECA. This was viewed as a clear sign that the United Nations remained concerned about Africa's development problems and was prepared to assist in the search for their solutions. The Conference noted that the Special Initiative was the latest addition to a long list of the United Nations programmes dedicated to Africa's development. It emphasized that the successful implementation of the Special Initiative would require political mobilization both within the continent and the world at large.

131. Participants underlined the importance of information as a basic tool for accelerating socio-economic development in Africa and the fundamental role that ECA could play in facilitating Africa's participation in the information revolution. In this context, particular emphasis was placed on the need to implement the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) which was primarily designed to help Africa to accelerate its development plans, stimulate growth and provide new opportunities in education, trade, health care, job creation and food security through the building of information and decision support systems.

132. The Conference reviewed progress reports on preparations for, and follow-up to international conferences as well as regional and international

programmes relevant or dedicated to Africa's development. These included the fourth World Conference on Women; the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II); the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the 1990s; the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF); the second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNCTADA II); the United Nations second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA II); the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development; and the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s.

133. The Conference adopted 20 resolutions and three decisions dealing with several issues on its agenda.

134. The Conference considered and endorsed the proposed Medium-term Plan of the Commission for the period 1998-2001.

135. The Conference expressed its sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Ethiopia for their generous hospitality and for facilitating the work of the Commission.

Done at the headquarters of the
Economic Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
8 May 1996.

Annex I

REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (30 APRIL TO 3 MAY 1996) AS ADOPTED BY THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION/ TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

A. *Attendance and organization of work*

1. The seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW) was held in the new United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 30 April to 3 May 1996. The meeting was formally opened by H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, also delivered a statement at the opening ceremony of the meeting. The representative of Madagascar moved a motion of appreciation on behalf of the participants.

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States of the Commission: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. Observers from the following Member States of the United Nations were present: Belgium, China, France, Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

4. The Holy See, not a Member of the United Nations, was also represented.

5. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD), Regional Commissions New York Office (RCNYO), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

6. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank (ADB) were represented.

7. Observers were present from the following intergovernmental organizations: African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), African Regional Standardization Organization (ARSO), Home and Environment Development Association (HEDA), African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), Regional Centre for Training in Aero-space Surveys (RECTAS), Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS).

8. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chairman:	Malawi
First Vice-Chairman:	Ghana
Second Vice-Chairman:	Cameroon
Rapporteur:	Algeria

9. The Committee established an open-ended subcommittee on resolutions which was chaired by the First Vice-Chairman. The following were the core members of the resolutions subcommittee:

West Africa:	Côte d'Ivoire, the Niger, Nigeria
North Africa:	Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia

East Africa:	Ethiopia, Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania
Southern Africa:	Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe
Central Africa:	The Congo, Gabon, Rwanda

B. Agenda

10. On 30 April 1996, the Committee adopted the following agenda:

Conference theme: Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

PART I

Conference theme: Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa

4. (a) The renewal programme at ECA: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa;

   (b) Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001.

PART II

Perspectives of Africa's socio-economic development

5. (a) Report on the economic and social situation in Africa, 1996;

   (b) United Nations System-wide Initiative on Africa;

   (c) Exploiting information technology to accelerate socio-economic development in Africa: An action plan.

PART III

Special issues

6. (a) Progress reports, preparation and follow-up of international and regional conferences and programmes;

      (i) Fourth World Conference on Women;

      (ii) Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II);

      (iii) Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the 1990s;

      (iv) United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF);

      (v) Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA II);

      (vi) Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA II);

      (vii) Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development;

      (viii) Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s.

   (b) Joint OAU/ECA progress report on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

PART IV

Statutory issues

7. (a) Biennial report of the Executive Secretary on the work of the Commission;

   (b) Progress report on programme evaluation at ECA (1994-1995 biennium);

   (c) Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies of the Commission calling for action by the Conference of Ministers.

8. Any other business.

9. Date and venue of the eighteenth meeting of TEPCOW.

PART V
Other matters

10. Special event: Panel discussion on the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa.

11. Adoption of the report.

12. Closure of the meeting.

C. Account of proceedings

Opening addresses

11. In his opening statement, H.E. Mr. Girma Birru, Minister of Economic Development and Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, welcomed participants to the meeting. He said it was in his capacity as the representative of Ethiopia as well as the outgoing Chairman of the Conference of Ministers that he also welcomed the new Executive Secretary, Mr. K.Y. Amoako, to the Commission. He said that he had worked closely with the Executive Secretary in the last 10 months, particularly on the renewal of the Commission to serve Africa better.

12. The theme of the conference, "Meeting the challenges of African development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa", was of great significance to the future of the continent and to all the people of Africa. He said that ECA was an important tool for galvanizing African States to overcome various challenges, broaden and accelerate development on a sustainable basis, end poverty, and reverse Africa's marginalization from the world political and economic system. No other institution was better placed than ECA to deliver to member States such development services. Therefore, the renewal of ECA and its re-orientation articulated in the new strategic directions document was a most compelling item on the agenda. On behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, he commended Mr. Amoako for having placed ECA at the forefront of the renewal process in the United Nations system.

13. The Minister noted that the remaining agenda items, notably the economic and social situation in Africa, an action plan to harness information technology, the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa and the panel discussion on a Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa, added meaning and urgency to the renewal of the Commission. Ethiopia fully endorsed ECA's renewal and its guiding principles of excellence, cost-effectiveness and effective partnership. His Government was satisfied with the Commission's analysis of the development challenges facing the continent, which underlines not only the strategic directions but also ECA's refocused programme structure emphasizing five areas of concentration plus the two cross-cutting issues of gender and capacity building. He however underscored the need for putting in place an effective implementation mechanism which would ensure an acceptable degree of success in achieving Africa's development goals.

14. The Minister informed the meeting of political and economic measures adopted by the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to consolidate political transition and stimulate economic recovery and growth. Ethiopia's first general election had been held in 1995. Local governments had now been formed on the basis of the country's new Federal Constitution which devolved powers of decision-making to elected regional councils on matters relating to the economic and social activities of the regions. On the economic front, the implementation of the Emergency, Recovery and Reconstruction Programme, the declaration of the New Economic Policy, the implementation of the Economic Reform Programme, and the formulation of a long-term development strategy had been among the most important measures taken to reverse two decades of continuous decline and bring about sustained growth and development.

15. In his statement, Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of ECA, said that this was an important day. It was the first official meeting in the new United Nations Conference Centre at Addis Ababa. It was the first official continent-wide discussion of a different ECA. And it was his first appearance before TEPCOW. He noted that both the present meeting of TEPCOW and the forthcoming Conference of Ministers were the culmination of very hard thinking and hard work. He thanked Mr. Girma Birru, Chairman of the outgoing Bureau of the Conference, and each of the Bureau members for aiding his smooth transition and for their full support in playing leading roles in events such as the major consultation on strategic directions for ECA with the Group of African High-Level Experts held in January 1996.

16. He observed that Africa's economic performance has witnessed some improvement after a record of negative development which had continued up to the early 1990s. However, there were seven basic challenges still facing Africa, namely the need to improve economic and social policies for securing growth and combating poverty; promotion of sustainable development through the interplay of food security, population and environment; strengthening of development management; harnessing of information technology; promotion of regional cooperation and integration as a way of forestalling marginalization in the global economy; the advancement of women; and capacity building.

17. ECA had embarked on a major reform with the aim of serving Africa better in the years ahead. This renewal of ECA was on a scale not seen in the organization's history. Excellence, cost-effectiveness and partnership were the guiding principles of this process of renewal. Highly expert diagnostic and prescriptive work had been done on existing programmes and management, utilizing the best resources around the world and the best of ECA's staff. Participatory in-house reviews had been carried out, eliciting an extraordinary level of commitment from the entire ECA professional workforce. The secretariat had also held a major consultation on ECA's proposed programmes in January 1996 with an impressive group of 40 African leaders, including government ministers, academics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector representatives from throughout Africa. The full membership of the Bureau of the ECA Conference of Ministers participated in the consultations.

18. The Executive Secretary then reviewed the components of ECA's renewal. First, on institutional strengthening, he said that over the next two years, steps would be taken to upgrade skills, augment staff and institutionalize ways of operating more productively and with greater impact. The second component was programmes. These would be consolidated and refocused. The existing nine programmes in 21 different areas would be consolidated into five core themes and two cross-cutting ones. This choice of programme concentration responded to clear mandates from the member States. It was also inspired by the Cairo Agenda for Action on Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development adopted by the OAU Council of Ministers in March 1995 and endorsed by the Assembly of the African Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in June 1995. The five programme areas were facilitating economic and social policy analysis; ensuring food security and sustainable development; strengthening development management; harnessing information for development; and promoting regional cooperation and integration, while the two cross-cutting issues were gender and capacity building.

19. The third component was about modalities. Here ECA would henceforth strive for impact not for more output. ECA would strive to reinforce its comparative advantage as a respected centre for discussion on policy issues and as a place where thinking and action were brokered. The secretariat would make more use of electronic products, overhaul its dissemination practices, designate national focal points and strengthen relationships with ambassadors in Addis Ababa. He proposed that fewer meetings should be held with sharper focus on more implementable results.

20. The fourth component, partnership, was basic to the renewal. ECA would become a less self-contained producer of work and far more a networker. Partnership was desired within Africa with key intellectual networks. Partnership was desired to promote South-South cooperation. Partnership was also desired with the donor community.

21. He referred to the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001 which was before the meeting for consideration. The endorsement of the Plan will greatly facilitate the rationalization of the work programme of the Commission.

22. Reviewing the other key agenda items of the meeting, he underscored the importance of the review of Africa's socio-economic development, the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa and the exploitation of information technology. He particularly invited TEPCOW to help the Conference of Ministers and African Governments to build interest in the Special Initiative so as to ensure that Africa derived full benefit from it. He also referred to the special events to be held during the current session of the Commission. There would be a panel discussion in TEPCOW on the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa. During the meeting of the Conference, another panel including leading experts would focus on the important topic of poverty and public expenditure.

23. The representative of Madagascar moved a vote of thanks on behalf of participants. He thanked H.E. Mr. Girma Birru for his statement which had provided constructive and useful proposals to the meeting, as well as acquainting participants with the efforts of the Federal

Democratic Republic of Ethiopia towards establishing a conducive political and economic environment for accelerated development in Ethiopia. He also congratulated the Executive Secretary for his efforts to renew ECA and expressed his full support to the process.

PART I
Conference theme: Meeting the challenges of Africa's development in the twenty-first century: The role of the Economic Commission for Africa

The renewal programme at ECA: Strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa [agenda item 4(a)] and Medium-Term Plan, 1998-2001 [agenda item 4(b)]

24. The Committee considered together the two documents entitled "Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for ECA" (document E/ECA/CM.22/2) and Medium-Term Plan, 1998-2001 (document E/ECA/CM.22/3).

25. In presenting these items, the Executive Secretary outlined the process through which the proposals for ECA's renewal were elicited. He indicated that, after his appointment in February 1995, he had made familiarization visits to ECA, prior to assuming office in July 1995, during which he had held preliminary discussions with ECA staff and programme managers to find out, from their perspective, the challenges, issues of importance and their hopes for the Commission. The Executive Secretary reported that ECA staff had expressed the view that whereas ECA had made important contributions to Africa's development in the past, time had come for a change in the way it planned and carried out its work as well as in the quality of its products. Staff had also expressed their frustration with lack of mobility and training opportunities and their dissatisfaction with the personnel management and administration systems. The Committee noted that it was these discussions which led the Executive Secretary to assign a high priority to the restructuring of ECA's personnel and administration structures as a first stage in the renewal of the Commission.

26. Following the early consultations with staff, in the second stage of the process, the Executive Secretary commissioned specific diagnostic studies making use of the best minds that he could find. These included:

(a) A team of management experts from the World Bank: to examine ECA's budgeting and planning process and its financial control system;

(b) A team of human resources experts: to study ECA's personnel system, i.e., hiring, human resources management, training, performance assessment, promotion and motivation;

(c) A team of information experts: to examine ECA's communications strategy; and

(d) A team of experts from Oxford University Centre for the Study of African Economies: to assess the technical quality of ECA's products, diagnose weaknesses, pinpoint strengths and indicate improvements that needed to be made.

27. The Executive Secretary pointed out to the Committee that, in making use of expert resources from the World Bank, ECA was following the example of other notable institutions, including ADB. Regarding the study on ECA's communications strategy, it was noted that this was of utmost importance, since ECA is a knowledge-based institution whose value to member States is as a source of ideas which, therefore, had to be disseminated promptly.

28. He said that in the third stage of the process, he had organized further consultations with ECA staff. In a series of town-hall meetings in which all ECA staff had participated, candid views were expressed about ECA's past and present performance and how this could be strengthened. This process had received the endorsement of the Staff Union. The Executive Secretary had solicited written submissions from programme managers and held meetings with them and their staff to discuss programme directions and their vision for the Commission. This process had culminated in a three-day "Open Space" staff conference where all ECA staff participated and themselves set the agenda for discussions on elements of the theme "Sharpening our focus, strengthening our partnerships and increasing our impact".

29. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that the overall report prepared by the staff after the "Open House" exercise had identified numerous issues that were crucial to the renewal of the Commission. The report had a number of key recommendations including, for example, that the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) should be used more effectively in ECA's outreach to member States; that there must be more internal transparency and better communications, and that an enabling environment should be maintained in the Commission; and that more effective partnerships should be forged, based on relative comparative advantages, identification of strategic issues for

collaboration, while paying special attention to the long-standing cooperation with OAU and ADB, with which ECA shares membership in the Joint Secretariat for the implementation of the Abuja Treaty.

30. The Executive Secretary emphasized that strategic focus was a matter of necessity. To achieve strategic focus, it was necessary to reorganize the programme of work which was now spread over a large number of unconnected activities. This would still leave plenty of scope to address Africa's development problems, and with selectivity and flexibility. There were too many meetings and there were too many reports which were not even well disseminated to the member States, universities or civil society organizations which might have made use of them. It was imperative to end ECA's remoteness from member States and for ECA to assume greater relevance in finding practical solutions to the problems faced by member States.

31. He said that to achieve cost-effectiveness, greater impact and excellence in its work, there was need for institutional strengthening at ECA. Staff capacity needed to be built through training and exposure to how other institutions work, through in-house training, staff exchanges and study sabbaticals. It was also necessary to inject new thinking into ECA from outside - for example, through fellowships to bring brilliant young African scholars to work at ECA on specific problems, etc.

32. The Executive Secretary underlined the need for ECA to seek enhanced partnerships in view of the enormous scope of Africa's development problems and the range of actors involved in the search for solutions. He observed that, as a centre for development dialogue between the actors in Africa's development, ECA had a vital role to play. It could set or, at least, influence Africa's development agenda and it could pool its resources with other partners to tackle difficult problems that no organization could tackle on its own. Furthermore, as a regional arm of the United Nations, ECA had important coordinating functions in ongoing as well new United Nations system-wide programmes for Africa's development - such as the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) and the new United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, both of which emphasized partnership among agencies of the United Nations system.

33. Referring to the Medium-term Plan, the Executive Secretary said that it was derived from the strategic directions. The Plan represents a framework of support to member States. The Conference was required to review and endorse it to the General Assembly for approval through the Secretary-General. Thereafter, it will define the work programme of the Commission in the Plan period.

34. In the ensuing discussion, the Committee commended and expressed strong support for the proposals presented by the Executive Secretary for the renewal of ECA. It was noted that the programme focus in the strategic directions document were consistent with member States' priorities, as reflected in such programmes as the Cairo Agenda. The new orientation should strengthen the structures of the Commission and render it better able to assist countries to meet the challenges of development. It would help ECA to concentrate on a few selected areas which will enable it to use its scarce resources to achieve greater impact.

35. The Committee encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue the reform and renewal process of the Commission. In that regard, it expressed the view that a renewed ECA could serve as an active and credible voice as well as a facilitator for Africa's development. Africa has a vast pool of technical expertise abroad which ECA could help mobilize in support of the region's development.

36. In order for ECA to be a credible partner in African development, the Committee recommended that ECA should implement people-centred programmes; assist in capacity and institution building as well as in negotiation concerning external debt; provide policy support; assist in the analysis of specific conditions in countries under which privatization is taking place; enhance the sharing of best practices and experiences; and devise development strategies that would minimize dependence on aid. To ensure that ECA priorities reflect the needs of the member States, the Committee was of the view that ECA should be actively involved in the formulation of national development plans from inception through implementation.

37. Some participants felt that ECA was too remote from its principal constituency - the member States. ECA needed to increase the frequency of its consultations with member States. In that regard, the Committee welcomed the Executive Secretary's proposal to establish a group of senior regional advisers on economic reforms at ECA, networking with eminent African

experts on issues of economic reforms and structural adjustment, who would respond to requests for assistance from member States. It was further suggested that ECA should put increased emphasis on holding discussions on specific development issues at the ministerial level in the subregions.

38. Emphasizing the importance of regional integration in Africa's development, the Committee stressed that the MULPOCs should be strengthened to support the subregional intergovernmental organizations which were the building blocs of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. Accordingly, the MULPOCs needed to be given sufficient resources and authority to execute their work programmes and respond creatively to the specificities of each subregion, given the variations in subregional needs. The Committee urged ECA to institute meetings of conference of ministers at the level of the subregions to decide on subregional development priorities. Concern was expressed, however, that the MULPOCs had not always been staffed with competent professionals. At the same time, the Committee cautioned against the proposal indicated in the strategic directions document to relocate the MULPOCs to the same capital cities as the headquarters of the subregional organizations. It was observed that in some subregions, there were several intergovernmental organizations. In those cases, what was important was to strengthen the MULPOCs to be of better service to their subregions than relocating them.

39. To address many of the problems relating to the MULPOCs, the Executive Secretary indicated that a task force had already been established within ECA to review all previous reports on the functioning of the MULPOCs and make recommendations for improving their operational performance. The recommendations of the task force would be the basis of consultations with member States.

40. Some participants urged that in the renewal process, due regard should be paid to subregional balance in the staffing of the secretariat of the Commission. It was specifically noted that the Southern African subregion was underrepresented in ECA. In reacting to those concerns, the Executive Secretary assured the Committee that due attention would be given to the issue, taking into account the rules and regulations governing recruitment and appointment in the United Nations.

41. The Committee advised that the activities of regional and international organizations operat-ing in Africa should be coordinated to avoid duplication and waste of scarce resources. The Committee stressed, in particular, the need to avoid duplication between ECA and OAU, especially in view of the impending launching of the Economic and Social Commission of the African Economic Community as provided for under the Abuja Treaty. The Committee welcomed the efforts being made by the chief executives of the two organizations as well as that of ADB to further harmonize and coordinate the activities of their organizations through the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat.

42. The Committee stressed that African countries should place more emphasis on food security through increased domestic production rather than dependence on imports. Equally, the approach to regional integration should stress the harmonization of production systems rather than overdependence on market integration.

43. The Committee observed that ECA had important roles to play at the continental, subregional and national levels, and it was noted that meeting those three roles would pose a formidable challenge to the Commission. The key to successful performance lay in selectivity and priority setting. At the continental level, ECA was already involved in issues of trade and investment, and the implementation of global and regional programmes of action in favour of Africa. At the subregional level, ECA saw plenty of opportunities to work with member States to strengthen the building blocks for continental integration. The Committee noted that it was at the national level that ECA would encounter the most difficulties, and yet the Commission could not afford not to be involved in assisting the member States to meet their development challenges - both in the short term and the medium to long term.

44. The Committee took note of document E/ECA/CM.22/2 and endorsed the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1998-2001 as contained in document E/ECA/CM.22/3 in the light of the foregoing discussions. It adopted draft resolution 1 (XVII).

Report on the economic and social situation in Africa, 1996 [agenda item 5(a)]

45. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/4, entitled "Report on the economic and social situation in Africa, 1996". The Committee noted that in

1995, Africa experienced, for the second consecutive year, a modest economic growth. The gross domestic product (GDP) of the region increased by 2.3 per cent, compared with a revised figure of 2.1 per cent in 1994 and 1.8 per cent in 1993. It further noted that despite that modest recovery of the GDP in 1995, many of the factors responsible for a weak economic performance in Africa over the years, both internal and external, were still at work and GDP growth was yet to keep pace with population growth, as a consequence of which per capita income declined by 0.6 per cent in 1995.

46. The Committee noted the differences in performance among subregions and individual countries. The West and Eastern and Southern African subregions registered growth rates in excess of the regional average in 1995, owing to the improved performance in their agricultural and mining sectors. In West Africa, GDP grew by 4.1 per cent in 1995, compared to an increase of only 1.0 per cent in 1994, while in Eastern and Southern Africa it grew respectively by 4.8 and 2.9 per cent as against 4.2 and 2.6 per cent in 1994. GDP growth has been limited to a mere 1.1 per cent in Central Africa. The countries of Southern, Eastern and North Africa have in general performed better than those in other subregions.

47. The Committee noted a number of internal and external explanatory factors for the modest recovery in the African economy in 1995. On the domestic front, the growth of regional output was mostly associated with the good performance in the manufacturing and mining sectors. The improvement in the mining sector was attributed to reform in the sector and increased investment. On the other hand, growth in manufacturing was due mainly to better supply of inputs and improvement in the importation of raw materials. The Committee was however concerned by the fact that agriculture, the mainstay of the African economy, did not perform well in 1995; its value added growth rate decelerated from 4.2 per cent in 1994 to 1.5 per cent in 1995.

48. On the external front, the Committee noted that although there were some improvements in exports earnings as shown by the increase of 11.1 per cent in 1995 as against 4.9 per cent only in 1994, Africa's share in world trade continued to decline from 3.1 per cent in 1990 to 2.2 per cent in 1995. The loss in market share as a whole was due to the extremely low level of competitiveness of Africa's exportable products. Most countries continued to rely on the same primary commodities they did in the 1960s and 1970s. The failure to transform the nature and content of their exportable commodities has had detrimental impact on their foreign exchange earnings as well as on their market share.

49. The Committee noted that the problem of Africa's external indebtedness grew worse in 1995, with the total stock of debt increasing by 4.1 per cent to reach $US 322.4 billion in 1995. The unbearable debt overhang was due to rising stock of external debt and the accumulation of debt-service arrears, capitalization of interests and the general hardening in lending terms.

50. The Committee noted that the crisis in the social sector remained severe in most African countries in 1995, not only because of rapid increase in population relative to economic growth, but also because of increasing unemployment, severe cutbacks in public expenditures in real terms, particularly in education, health and social welfare. The problem of unemployment remains critical in Africa particularly among educated people. The implications of large numbers of unemployed educated youth and university graduates are serious for Africa's social and political stability. Public expenditure on education in sub-Saharan Africa is the lowest in the world. The most severe cuts on education have been made in capital and recurrent expenditures for new construction, supplies, furniture, equipment for science laboratories and for repair and maintenance. The number of refugees and displaced persons in Africa remains extremely high. About 7 million are directly categorized as refugees in Africa.

51. The Committee observed that in 1996 and beyond, the economic prospects of Africa would once again be determined not only by the weather situation but also by the extent to which some African Governments persist with domestic policy reforms, sound economic management, maintenance of stable political systems and a positive, people-oriented political climate, coupled with favourable developments in the international economic environment. Should these conditions prevail, the regional output would likely grow by 2.9 per cent in 1996.

52. The Committee underscored the importance of the allocation and delivery mechanisms of the funds that have to be mobilized, particularly by improving access to rural credit. It further emphasized the need to strike a balance between rationalization of government expenditures with a view to reducing existing deficit and making adequate public investment in productive sectors. It was stressed that governments needed to

broaden their revenue base and promote inflow of foreign capital as a means of boosting financial resources for development.

53. The Committee wondered why foreign direct investment (FDI) to Africa has not increased in spite of the fact that the rate of return on FDI in Africa was the highest in the world and asked what ECA could do to improve Africa's low credit rating. It was explained that ECA was doing a lot to promote investment in Africa. For example, it had held a workshop on stimulating investment in Africa two years ago. The report of that workshop was available for distribution to interested participants. ECA was also organizing an international conference on reviving private investment in Africa, to be held in Accra in June 1996. All these efforts should encourage flows of FDI to Africa.

54. The Committee noted that the data on refugees in the report were based on 1994 statistics that were released in 1995. More recent data for 1995 were available and could be supplied by UNHCR on request. It was stressed that reintegration rather than resettlement of refugees was the appropriate description of the activities undertaken to support returnees. It was also noted that the report should reflect that rapid repatriation, described as the only sustainable solution for refugees in Africa can only take place voluntarily and when conditions in countries of origin permitted.

55. Emphasizing the need to overcome Africa's external debt, the Committee suggested that ECA undertake a study on the link between Africa's external debt and external trade. Given the fact that the CFA franc devaluation had not yielded the expected results in terms of Africa's debt, the Committee requested ECA not only to conduct a study to assess the impact of the devaluation exercise on debt and trade but also to undertake a prospective analysis of the effects that the single European currency (the Euro) would have on national economies in the franc zone.

56. The Committee also underscored the need for ECA to pay due regard to the role of the informal sector as a source of growth as well as the effect of natural disasters, such as drought and locust in the economic performance of affected countries. There was also need for ECA to promote the sharing of experience on how some countries had achieved high contraceptive prevalence rates. At the same time, it was stressed that high fertility should be viewed in a critical but positive light. It was emphasized that Africa's political leadership should address the issue of fertility with courage.

57. The Committee expressed the view that political conflicts did not always have negative effects on production in some countries; instead, conflicts and strife tended to deter foreign investment.

58. The Committee was of the view that African industrial products should meet international standards of quality, if they were to be world competitive. The new standards of quality also had environmental component, and it was of crucial importance for African countries to meet industrial and environment standards of quality.

59. Some representatives pointed out certain inaccuracies in the data provided in the report. This related, for example, to GDP growth rate and other country's macroeconomic indicators as well as figures for AIDS in various African countries. Some of the participants indicated that they would provide the secretariat with correct and more recent data as it concerned their countries. The revised data should be included in the 1996 report and should be cross-checked with member States before their publication. The economic and social report on Africa is an important reference document and should be disseminated to government policy makers, universities and other institutions.

60. The Committee took note of the report in the light of the above observations.

United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa [agenda item 5(b)]

61. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/5 entitled "The United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa".

62. The Committee noted that the Special Initiative on Africa was launched on 15 March 1996 by the Secretary-General, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, with the participation of the executive heads of all the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system represented in the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). The current Chairman and a representative of the Secretary-General of OAU also took part in the launch at Addis Ababa via satellite. The Special Initiative is the United Nations system's most significant and largest coordinated action in support of Africa's development. Its aim was to mobilize international support for Africa's development through practical actions, focusing

on development priorities identified by the African countries themselves.

63. The Special Initiative focuses on 14 key areas, grouped together in four themes, namely giving development a chance; new hope for upcoming generation; strengthening the capacity for governance; and urgency on survival issues. The theme of "Giving development a chance" identified the following as key elements: peace-building, conflict resolution and national reconciliation through strengthening OAU's capacity for peace-building, strengthening civil society for peace-building, and strengthening communications for peace building; external support for Africa's economic transition, including, substantial debt relief, expanding Africa's trade access and opportunities, partnership with Africa through South-South cooperation; internal resource mobilization, domestic savings and investment; and harnessing information technology for development.

64. The issues covered under the theme "New hope for the upcoming generation" include promoting basic education for all African children; improving access to health services by the African population; promoting employment and sustainable livelihoods, especially through programmes aimed at poverty-reduction through the promotion of the informal sector and employment-generating opportunities, and promoting sustainable livelihoods in environmentally marginal areas. In the area of "Strengthening the capacity for governance", focus is on expanding the capacities for transparent, responsible and effective governance, especially through the Africa leadership forum, developing governance strategy for Africa, promoting security, stability, development and cooperation in Africa; and strengthening civil society for development, including peace-building. The theme on "Urgency on survival issues" covers food security and drought management, with particular emphasis on land degradation and desertification control, soil quality improvement, food security, with special emphasis on the role of women; assuring sustainable use of and equitable access to freshwater; improving household water security; freshwater assessments; and improving availability of water for food production.

65. The Special Initiative would mobilize an estimated sum of $25 billion over a 10-year period to finance the 14 identified priority areas. Financing for the Special Initiative was expected to come partially from the redirection of existing resources at national and international levels and partly from new resources. The Special Initiative proposes three avenues for resource mobilization, namely multilateral and bilateral donors are to create goal-oriented regional forums to raise resources for key sectors; African Governments are to prepare goal-oriented country investment programmes and projects to maximize the impact of internal and external resources mobilized; participation in consultative group and round-table meetings was to be broadened to encourage involvement and participation of non-traditional partners, such as business and civil society.

66. The Special Initiative also recommended other ways of mobilizing resources, including deeper debt relief, an expansion of Africa's trade opportunities and enhancing South-South cooperation. Activities relating to mobilizing domestic and external effort and resources for the support and implementation of the Special Initiative would centre around: building partnership innovations for more effective development cooperation, especially through promoting goal-oriented regional forums; promoting preparation of goal-oriented country programmes and projects; broadening participation in Consultative Groups and Round-table meetings of African countries; and analysis of the financial implications of the Special Initiative and the resources that would be needed for its successful implementation, including ODA flows, debt relief and domestic resource mobilization and utilization. Implementation of the Special Initiative calls for mobilization of political commitment and support, putting in place implementation arrangements, including coordination among United Nations agencies, focus on country-level actions and putting in place monitoring and reporting arrangements on the implementation of the Special Initiative.

67. The Committee welcomed the Special Initiative on Africa and considered it timely and opportune for Africa at this point in time. Many participants expressed support for the Special Initiative and indicated that they were looking forward to the implementation of the activities indicated in it. There was concern, however, that the international community appeared to have lost interest in issues of peace-keeping in Africa, as exemplified by the Liberian and Somali situations. They further expressed concern that the resources earmarked for implementation of the Initiative appeared inadequate in view of the serious socio-economic situation prevailing in Africa. The Committee expressed concern that many countries do not as yet know about the Special Initiative and hence the need to popularize it. In this respect, the Committee recommended that national focal points for the implementation of the Special Initiative be designated. Performance indicators for

better evaluation of the impact of the Special Initiative should be developed.

68. The Committee noted that the modalities for financial resource mobilization in support of the Special Initiative had not been clearly defined and wished to be informed as to how agencies were to share this task. The Committee also called for enhanced cooperation and collaboration among United Nations agencies in order to avoid duplication of effort, including at the country level. The Committee underscored the importance of coordinating the Special Initiative with the strategic directions of ECA and to involve African Governments in the implementation of the Special Initiative at the national level.

69. The Committee called for optimal networking among United Nations agencies at the country level in the implementation of the Special Initiative. It also called for intensive collaboration among the members of the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat. Furthermore, the Committee called for the involvement of the subregional groupings in the formulation, design and implementation of programmes and projects under the Special Initiative. The Committee underlined the need to make use of country experts in various elements of its implementation. The Committee requested that due balance be given between national and subregional concerns in the Special Initiative.

70. The Committee emphasized the need for fine tuning of educational programmes, with special emphasis on youth education and technical training to enable them to participate effectively in the development process. The Committee called for special emphasis under the Special Initiative in promoting the development of the informal sector, particularly access to bank credit, and improving financial absorptive capacity. The Committee underscored the need to reduce local counterpart funding for resources to be provided under the Special Initiative. The Committee recommended that mechanisms be put in place for monitoring and evaluation of its implementation. The Committee wanted to be assured that the resources needed to support the Special Initiative would be mobilized, particularly at this stage when the United Nations system as a whole is facing financial difficulties and there would appear to be donor fatigue. The Committee insisted that programmes under the Special Initiative should be demand-driven.

71. The Committee took note of the involvement of WMO in the launching of the Special Initiative, its role as lead agency on water issues and its offer of cooperation with ECA and other agencies in the implementation of the Special Initiative in this area. The Committee further noted the participation of UNIDO in the Special Initiative and in particular its commitment to collaborate with OAU and ECA in developing an alliance on industrialization of Africa. The Committee also noted that ILO had assisted many African countries in developing labour and social development programmes designed to generate employment and reduce poverty. Those issues, which occupy centre stage in African countries, should be given due priority in the Special Initiative.

72. The Committee took note of the observation by UNHCR that the issues of humanitarian assistance should also be given due attention in the Special Initiative in view of the large number of refugees and displaced persons in Africa that need immediate assistance and of the need to link humanitarian assistance to development. It further noted that UNFPA attached much importance to achieving a balance between population and natural resources endowment in order to promote sustainable development and protection of the environment.

73. Several participants posed a number of questions relating to the Special Initiative. For example, a question was asked why was a new initiative for Africa needed, given the numerous existing programmes for African development? How did this Special Initiative differ from previous United Nations initiatives on Africa, such as UN-NADAF? What was the link between the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative and ECA's new strategic directions? What were the modalities for the implementation of the Special Initiative? What was the link between the 20:20 formula adopted under the World Social Summit in Copenhagen and the resources to be earmarked to these sectors under the Special Initiative? Why were no resources earmarked for implementation of the priorities under "food security with special emphasis on women" and "poverty reduction and employment"?

74. It was clarified that the Special Initiative was designed to maintain international support for Africa. It was new because for the first time the agencies of United Nations System were really committed to coordinating action at national level.

75. As regards the relationship between the Special Initiative and other United Nations agendas on Africa, it was explained that the priorities in the Special Initiative corresponded with those articulated by African countries in various programmes

such as the Cairo Agenda and UN-NADAF and, accordingly, the Special Initiative complements rather than competes with other United Nations initiatives on Africa. Indeed, the Special Initiative was a contribution of United Nations agencies to the implementation of UN-NADAF.

76. It was further explained that huge financial outlay for social sectors in the Special Initiative reflected the 20:20 principle of the Copenhagen Summit. It was noted that investing in education is one of the best investments for catalyzing development. Accordingly, investment in the social sectors has become an imperative for Africa. The resource requirements for poverty reduction and employment are currently being quantified.

77. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that he had just returned from a meeting in Nairobi where he had chaired the meeting of the Steering Committee of the Special Initiative. He explained that the Steering Committee would be the main mechanism for coordinating implementation of the Special Initiative. He stated that many of the issues raised by the Committee had also been raised in other forums. He gave the background to the Special Initiative and informed the Committee that it was not necessarily the sum total of all United Nations programmes and initiatives in Africa. He said that the role of the various United Nations agencies will need to be defined further. With regard to whether the resources under the Special Initiative would be additional, he said that that would depend on the country programmes. The Executive Secretary stated that the Special Initiative would initially be tested on a few countries to determine whether it could yield results. He said that the Special Initiative would be presented to the Group of Seven (G7) by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

78. The secretariat called on member States to take advantage of the opportunities to be provided by the Special Initiative to accelerate the development process in their countries.

79. The Committee took note of the report and adopted draft resolution 2 (XVII).

Exploiting information technology to accelerate socio-economic development in Africa [agenda Item 5 (c)]

80. The Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/6, entitled "African Information Society Initiative (AISI): An action framework and communication infrastructure". The action plan had been prepared in response to ECA resolution 795 (XXX) of 3 May 1995 which had requested the Executive Secretary of ECA to appoint a High-level Working Group of African Experts in Information and Communication Technologies to prepare a proposal for an African Information and Communication Initiative, an action plan to accelerate African Socio-Economic Development through the application of information technology to all social and economic sectors.

81. The action plan was presented by the Chairman of the High-level Working Group.

82. In considering the action plan, the Committee observed that the move towards the information age offered great potential to improve the quality of life of every person in Africa. The Committee further observed that the relentless competition, innovation and convergence in technologies, which have led elsewhere to massive drops in the price of communication and information systems and fundamentally altered the nature of the global economy, mean that Africa had a window of opportunity to use these tools to accelerate its own socio-economic development.

83. The Committee noted that the proposed initiative called for the formulation and development of a national information and communication infrastructure (NICI) plan in every African country in which such information infrastructure does not yet exist. The Committee stressed that this plan should respond to national development challenges such as debt management, food security, health education, population, unemployment, job creation, industrialization, land reclamation, water, tourism, trade, etc. The Committee further noted that the emphasis was on the need to support decision-making at all levels and would provide information and communication infrastructure for government, business and society to enlighten the process of development. Secondly, the initiative proposed cooperation, linkage and partnership between African countries to share the success of accumulated implementation experiences and stimulate regional development in various information and communication fields. The Committee noted that the proposed initiative called for the formulation and development of national and regional information and communication infrastructure plan in every African country and subregion.

84. The Committee underscored the importance to African countries to implement the plan so as to ensure that they are not left behind by the developed countries, which are already on the information superhighway. However, the

Committee noted that in implementing the action plan, due attention should be given to the development of the information infrastructure of the African countries which, at this point in time, is not yet fully developed. The Committee further observed that the plan, as it has been put together, seems to be too ambitious and that ECA should approach it on a pilot basis or in phases. A suggestion was made to ECA to develop an ethic for information science and telematics in general. The Committee recommended that efforts should be made to improve existing facilities.

85. In conclusion, the Committee underlined the benefits African countries can get from the implementation of the action plan and emphasized the need for Africa not to be marginalized. The Committee further stated that information technology was playing a big role in job creation and investment in developed countries. However, it was noted that it should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a means and way to development. The action plan had to take into consideration the differences in technological level in each African country.

86. However, emphasis was placed on the need for African countries to develop their information infrastructure, to be able to have the information to be exchanged, develop the capacity to manage information and information systems, and that ECA should play a leading role in sensitizing member States to implement the action plan.

87. The Committee further noted that the action plan was in line within the ECA's new strategic directions and the implementation of the Special Initiative, in which harnessing information technology for the development of Africa has been given much emphasis.

88. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to use the findings of the Information Society and Development Conference to be held in Johannesburg from 11 to 15 May 1996.

89. The Committee took note of the action plan in light of the observations made and adopted draft resolution 3 (XVII).

PART III
SPECIAL ISSUES

Progress report on preparation and follow-up to international and regional conferences and programmes [agenda item 6 (a)]

90. Under this agenda item, the Committee examined documents E/ECA/CM.22/7, E/ECA/CM.22/7/Add.1 and E/ECA/CM.22/7/Add.2, entitled "Progress report on preparations and follow-up to international and regional conferences and programmes" which constituted the working documents for agenda items 6 (a)(i) to (viii).

Fourth World Conference on Women [agenda item 6(a)(i)]

91. The Committee noted that, in its preparatory process, ECA held several meetings which culminated in the Regional Conference on Women held in Dakar, Senegal in 1994. That conference had adopted the Regional Common Position which was taken to the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in September 1995 which, in turn, adopted the Global Platform for Action which provides guidelines on social, economic and political empowerment of women. The Global Platform identified 12 critical areas of concern and spelled out actions which would enable the full participation of women in political, social and economic life of their countries, with special emphasis on the rights of the girl-child.

92. The Committee also noted that the primary responsibility for the follow-up and implementation of the Global Platform for Action lay with governments, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies. The follow-up would include establishment of development plans and mobilization of resources for the programmes especially in the eradication of poverty. Noting with satisfaction that ECA was at the forefront in the support of gender issues, it underscored the need to give special attention to the gender issues while formulating development programmes and priorities.

93. The Committee recommended that there should be at least one staff at each MULPOC to cover women issues at the subregional level. This should be done during the implementation of ECA's new structure. One participant suggested that the Bureaux of the African Regional Conference and the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) should be amalgamated and work together since they have the same objectives.

The need to strengthen the African Centre for Women was also emphasized.

94. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made in various African countries in the follow-up to the fourth World Conference on Women. Several delegations reported that their countries now have Ministries for Women Affairs, while others had started programmes on peace initiative and others are supporting women issues practically with resources.

95. The Committee wanted to know the measures taken to sensitize the United Nations to support ECA member States on gender issues; how gender issues would be incorporated in the Special Initiative; who was responsible in each subregion for the coordination of the follow-up to the fourth World Conference on Women in Africa and; what was the role of UNDP in that regard.

96. In his response, the Executive Secretary reassured the Committee that he was personally committed to the engendering of ECA. For example, he would be strengthening the African Centre for Women which would be attached to his office. A sum of $1.5 million had already been mobilized to help establish an African women leadership fund. The objective was to raise $5 million. He further reassured the Committee that the secretariat was taking seriously the responsibility of coordinating the region's activities in the follow-up to the Beijing Conference. Moreover, programme managers and their staff would be trained in gender advocacy and gender policy analysis. Gender balance would also be ensured throughout the secretariat.

Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements [agenda item 6(a)(ii)]

97. The Committee was informed that the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) would be held in Istanbul, Turkey from 3 to 14 June 1996. Habitat II was expected to come up with the statement of Principles and Commitment and the Global Plan of Action (Habitat Agenda).

98. The Committee noted with satisfaction that ECA had played a central role in Africa in the preparatory process. Several meetings had been convened in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat) and OAU. The purpose of those meetings was to prepare an African common position on human settlements for Istanbul. ECA was also finalizing the regional report on the state of human settlements and the continental shelter atlas for Africa. Those two documents would be the Commission's contribution to the Conference.

99. The Committee was informed that the Executive Secretary of ECA had been designated coordinator of all regional commissions in the Habitat II preparatory process, during and after the Conference. The Committee urged African countries to participate effectively at Istanbul, support the regional position and ensure its incorporation in the Global Plan of Action (Habitat Agenda).

100. With regard to the future of UNCHS-Habitat, the Committee requested that the African Governments should support the strengthening of the Centre as it was based in Africa. It further requested the Executive Secretary to use his position as coordinator of the regional commissions to mobilize political and diplomatic support for the future existence of the Centre. The Committee noted with satisfaction the support given by the Group of 77 and China for the strengthening and continued existence of the Nairobi-based UNCHS-Habitat.

Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s [agenda item 6(a)(iii)]

101. Under this agenda item, the secretariat reported on developments which had occurred following the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the mid-term global review of the Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA) which had been conducted at New York in 1995 and issues relating to the special measures adopted with regard to the land-locked countries.

102. Despite the intensive efforts made by the least developed countries (LDCs) to undertake the economic reforms prescribed in the SNPA, they had not been able to achieve a number of the programme objectives and their general economic situation had continued to deteriorate as a result of several domestic and external factors.

103. With regard to African LDCs, the Committee noted that the intergovernmental meeting had adopted a declaration and made recommendations for boosting the implementation of the SNPA.

104. Finally, the Committee was informed of activities undertaken by the secretariat and others planned for the LDC group of countries within the 1996-1997 programme budget. The Committee took note of all this information and requested ECA to give the LDCs every necessary assistance

and to help them find solutions, including the problem of refugees.

United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) [agenda item 6(a)(iv)]

105. Under this agenda item, the Committee noted that since the last Conference of Ministers, two major developments related to the implementation of UN-NADAF had taken place within the United Nations system, namely the evaluation of the UN-NADAF conducted in 1995 by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) at the request of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa, launched in response to a recommendation of CPC, the United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and funds (including the international financial institutions) under the aegis of the Inter-Agency Task Force (UN-IATF)

106. The Committee noted that ECA had been assigned the task of coordinating the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the mid-term review of the implementation of UN-NADAF. For that purpose, the secretariat had prepared a questionnaire which had been sent to the Ministers of Economic Planning and Development of member countries. The Committee urged member States to send the completed questionnaire to the secretariat as soon as possible.

107. The Committee decided to postpone discussions on this item and to consider it in conjunction with the agenda item on programme evaluation, since the JIU report on UN-NADAF was included in the report on that item.

Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA II) [agenda item 6(a)(v)]

108. The Committee noted the six initial primary objectives of the UNTACDA II programme which were designed to establish an integrated transport and communications system in Africa. It also outlined the mechanisms at national and subregional levels set up for the implementation of the Decade programme, the difficulties encountered and the need to strengthen the national coordinating committees and improve resource mobilization.

109. The Committee reaffirmed the importance and relevance of the objectives of the UNTACDA II programme for regional integration. In that regard, several participants observed that they had used the programme as a framework for developing their national and regional infrastructure.

110. However, concern was expressed regarding ECA's role in mobilizing resources for the Decade programme which was viewed as crucial to the integration of the continent. In that regard, the Committee expressed doubt about the usefulness of decades if there were no resources to implement them. The Committee emphasized the need for strengthening the national and the subregional mechanisms for the implementation of the programme.

111. The Committee advised that efforts should be made to study and adopt alternative approaches for stimulating the development of the transport, communications and industrial sectors, given the fact that other decade programmes had not yielded all the expected results.

112. The Committee noted that the mid-term review of the Decade would take place in 1997. In that regard, the Committee recommended that the next evaluation should take into account such special issues as private sector participation and regional integration.

113. Noting that the tenth Conference of Ministers of Transport and Communications had called for harmonizing the World Bank's sub-Saharan African Transport Programme (SSATP) and the UNTACDA II programme, the Committee emphasized the need for the secretariat to take an active part in the evaluation of the SSATP.

Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA II) [agenda item 6(a)(vi)]

114. Under this agenda item, the Committee noted that the twelfth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry held in Gaborone, Botswana from 29 May to 8 June 1995 had adopted resolution 1 (XII) on the implementation of the IDDA II, resolution 2 (XII) on mobilization of resources for industrialization in Africa, resolution 3 (XII) on the development of the private sector for industrialization in Africa, resolution 4 (XII) on the enhancement of women's contribution to the implementation of the programme for the IDDA II and resolution 5 (XII) on the African common position for the sixth session of the General Conference of UNIDO.

115. The Committee observed that since IDDA II had been launched by and for African States, efforts should be made to mobilize internal and

external resources for the implementation of the programme. ECA and ADB were invited to work with member States in order to find new approaches to the mobilization of financial resources.

116. One participant stressed the importance of adopting a more global approach to industrialization programmes in Africa, instead of launching decades which failed to achieve set objectives.

117. The Committee further observed that industrialization could be achieved not only through the establishment of large enterprises but also through micro, small and medium enterprises. In that line, Africa should learn from the experience of the newly industrialized countries which had developed through the promotion of the private sector, especially the micro, small and medium enterprises. It particularly underscored women's participation in the development process through the establishment of informal and micro enterprises and the nurturing of an indigenous African entrepreneurship culture.

118. Noting the various activities undertaken by ECA and UNIDO to implement IDDA II, the Committee urged ECA to work closely with UNIDO, which is allocating 40 per cent of its technical assistance delivery to African industrialization. The Committee noted with satisfaction the close working relations between ECA and the World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME) in the promotion of micro, small and medium enterprises in Africa.

119. The Committee took note of the efforts made by ECA to foster South-South cooperation, especially with Asian and Latin American countries as well as regional and subregional cooperation in its new programme.

Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development [agenda item 6(a)(vii)]

120. The Committee noted that the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development adopted by the third African Population Conference held in Dakar in 1992 had been the African common position submitted to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

121. It further noted that the outcome of ICPD was reported to the thirtieth session of the Commission/twenty-first meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning in 1995. Upon the request of the Follow-up Committee for the implementation of ICPD, a workshop on the implementation of the Declaration and of the ICPD Programme of Action had been organized jointly by OAU, ECA and ADB in Abidjan. The results of the workshop had been communicated to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment and to the ninth session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists which had both been held in 1996.

122. The Committee was informed of the difficulties encountered in implementing the Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action despite every effort being made by the member States concerned.

123. The Committee took note of all this information and requested OAU, ECA and ADB to intensify their cooperation and to assist ECA member States to implement both the Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action.

Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s [agenda item 6(a)(viii)]

124. The Committee took note of the progress report on the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s, which gave an update of the needs assessment exercise and strategy development (NASD) programme. The Committee also noted that 11 countries had already conducted NASD exercises, and that another 15 were planning to do likewise.

125. The Committee took note of the progress reports on preparation and follow-up of international and regional conferences and programmes.

Joint OAU/ECA progress report on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community [agenda item 6(b)]

126. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/8, entitled "Joint OAU/ECA progress report on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community".

127. The Committee noted the progress made in the implementation of the Treaty but deplored the slow pace of progress on the drafting of the

protocols, the preparation of the organizational chart of the Community secretariat and of the summarized version of the Treaty. Regarding the protocols, the Committee emphasized the need to speed up the process, particularly the protocol on relationships between the Community and the regional economic communities so that the chief executives of those communities could finally adopt them at their forthcoming meeting in June 1996. For that to happen, it would be necessary to harmonize and coordinate the activities of the regional economic communities with a view to avoiding duplication. Furthermore, the Committee urged the OAU secretariat to submit the proposed organizational chart to the Committee of 14 and to finalize in all the OAU working languages the abridged version of the Treaty so that it could be translated into the vernacular languages of member States.

128. The Committee emphasized the role of the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat in the implementation of the Abuja Treaty and urged a review of the most recent activities undertaken by that secretariat in preparation for the meeting of chief executives which would be held in June 1996.

129. The Committee also took note of the discussion on the relationship between the Community and ECA conducted within the Joint Secretariat and on which proposals would be submitted to the upcoming meeting of the Economic and Social Commission of the Community. The Committee felt that it would be necessary to take into consideration the new strategic directions of ECA, and to redefine the powers of the Permanent Steering Committee of OAU.

130. The Committee took note of this report in light of these comments.

Biennial Report of the Executive Secretary, 1994-1995 [agenda item 7(a)

131. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/9, entitled "Biennial Report of the Executive Secretary" which provided an overview of the activities undertaken by the Commission in implementing its programme of work and priorities during the biennium 1994-1995 and of the availability and utilization of resources within ECA.

132. The Committee noted that these activities included advocating economic and social policies, articulating plans and strategies, strengthening institutions for development and providing technical assistance to member States and their intergovernmental organizations. It also noted that modalities of the implementation of these activities encompassed meetings, training programmes, publications, establishment of data bases and some operational activities, all focused around nine subprogrammes.

133. The Committee was informed that financial resources made available to the Commission had declined due to the United Nations budget crisis and to the withdrawal of some traditional partners.

134. The Committee expressed its concern about the multitude of activities carried out by the Commission, resulting in a very broad spread of efforts and resources among these activities, which minimized the impact of the Commission's work. It called for the need to be more focused and concentrate on fewer activities such as poverty alleviation and capacity building which would have greater impact at country level, especially considering the decline of financial resources within the secretariat.

135. In response, the Executive Secretary observed that, as reflected in the new strategic directions, reforms were guided by three principles, namely excellence, greater cost effectiveness and more effective partnership and that given the resources constraints, the limits to the staff size, and the vast diversity of the Commission mandate and functions, narrowing the ECA's agenda was essential for an increased impact.

136. He also informed the Committee that the next biennial report would also reflect views and comments of member States and other beneficiaries of ECA activities on the impact of the Commission's work and on the areas where improvement would be needed.

137. The Committee also took note of clarifications provided by some partners with regard to their financial assistance to the Commission, which over the past years had declined, due to their own restructuring processes. That assistance, in the future, may resume, especially given the new strategic directions adopted by ECA.

Progress report on programme evaluation at ECA (1994-1995 biennium) [agenda item 7(b)]

138. The Committee considered document E/ECA/CM.22/10, entitled "Progress report on programme evaluation (biennium 1994-1995)" which provided details of programme evaluation carried out during the biennium 1994-1995, together with its two addendum reports, namely E/ECA/CM.22/-10/Add.1, entitled "In-depth evaluation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa natural resources and energy subprogramme" and E/ECA/CM.22/10/Add.2, entitled "Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF): Towards a more operational approach" which was undertaken by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

139. The Committee noted that, in 1993, the ECA Conference of Ministers adopted a schedule for programme evaluation of the Medium-term Plan for 1992-1997 in ECA. In line with United Nations policies on programme monitoring and evaluation and on the basis of that schedule, five subprogrammes for the biennium 1994-1995 were evaluated. They were: (a) trade, regional economic cooperation and integration; (b) poverty alleviation through sustainable development; (c) human resources development and social transformation; (d) natural resources and energy development; and (e) women in development.

140. The Committee also noted that all the evaluation studies were undertaken in the form of self-evaluation by the programme managers. However, the evaluation of a few subprogrammes, namely natural resources and energy development, was based on an in-depth evaluation approach.

141. The Committee observed that documents provided under the item were very important and their findings required further study, because the recommendations needed careful consideration in line with ECA's strategic vision.

142. The Committee observed that member States were going through very difficult economic problems which hindered the implementation of UN-NADAF. The Committee therefore recommended that a resolution be adopted urging United Nations Headquarters to allocate more funds to the secretariat of the UN-NADAF Inter-Agency Task Force located at ECA headquarters for the implementation of UN-NADAF activities in Africa.

143. The Committee further recommended that the MULPOCs should be strengthened in order to carry out more effectively activities for the implementation of UN-NADAF in Africa. In that regard, ECA should mobilize more extrabudgetary resources.

144. With regard to the JIU report, the Committee noted that it was prepared at the request of CPC to evaluate progress of UN-NADAF. It commended JIU for an objective and comprehensive evaluation of UN-NADAF. The report contained recommendations which were in line with ECA's strategic vision.

145. The representative of DPCSD provided a number of clarifications on global policy activities and operational activities for the implementation of the New Agenda, the need to separate the United Nations system internal evaluation from the substantive review of UN-NADAF by the General Assembly and the procedures observed by the United Nations for the consideration of JIU reports.

146. The Committee took note of the reports in the light of this document.

Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies calling for action by the Conference of Ministers [agenda item 7(c)]

147. The Committee considered documents E/ECA/CM.22/11, entitled "Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies calling for action by the Conference of Ministers" and E/ECA/CM.22/-11/Add.1, entitled "Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies and ECA-sponsored institutions calling for action by the Conference of Ministers". The documents described issues calling for action by the Commission as well as those brought to the attention of the Conference and relating to the following subsidiary organs: the Conference of African Ministers of Industry; the African Regional Conference on Science and Technology; the Regional Conference of African Ministers responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy; the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Trade, Regional Cooperation, Integration and Tourism; the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment; the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists; the Governing Board of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD); and the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC). These were issues concerning meetings organized by ECA since the Commission last met in May 1995.

148. Operative paragraph 1.c of the decisions adopted by the seventeenth meeting of ARCC had been modified to state that the country serving as Chairperson of the African Regional Conference on Women would become a member of the Bureau of ARCC.

149. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee of the work ECA was doing by way of a critical review of the resolutions adopted over the past five years, with a view to assessing their implementability, and in particular to see whether there had been follow-up actions. He further informed the Committee of consultations he had held with OAU, UNEP and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Bureau, with a view to resolving the legal issues raised by the adoption of Commission resolution 757 (XXVIII) of 4 May 1993 establishing the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment (CAMSDE). He explained that there were two main problems posed by the establishment of CAMSDE. First, the ECA Conference of Ministers, in creating CAMSDE in 1993, abolished AMCEN, which the Conference apparently had no authority to do. Second, there appeared to be considerable overlap in the mandates of AMCEN and CAMSDE. He said that the purpose of his consultations with OAU, UNEP and the AMCEN Bureau was to deal with these two issues and the outcome was contained in document E/ECA/CM.22/11/Add.2.

150. The Committee referred the resolutions to the subcommittee on resolutions it had established. It subsequently adopted the following resolutions after their presentation by the Chairman of the subcommittee on resolutions: 4 (XVII), 5 (XVII), 6 (XVII), 7 (XVII), 8 (XVII), 9 (XVII), 10 (XVII), 11 (XVII), 12 (XVII), 13 (XVII), 14 (XVII), 15 (XVII), 16 (XVII), 17 (XVII) and 18 (XVII) and three decisions: DEC.1 (XVII), DEC.2 (XVII) and DEC.3 (XVII).

Any other business (agenda item 8)

151. Under this agenda item, one participant commented on the late availability of documents and insisted that, in future, documents should be sent well in advance to member States so that they can study them and make meaningful contributions to meetings. The Executive Secretary assured the Committee that communications with member States was already being accorded priority within the framework of ECA renewal and reform.

Date and venue of the eighteenth meeting of TEPCOW (agenda item 9)

152. Under this agenda item, the meeting was informed that the date and venue of the Conference are established on the basis of consultations between the Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Conference of Ministers.

Special event: Panel discussion on the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa (agenda item 10)

153. Under this agenda item, a panel discussion on the Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa, based on the draft document E/ECA/CM.22/12, was held on 2 May 1996.

154. The Framework Agenda had been discussed at the annual sessions of the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning, beginning in 1994. In that year, a preliminary report on the Framework Agenda was presented to the Conference, which endorsed and directed the secretariat of the Commission to continue work on the initiative. Subsequently, an elaborate progress report on the Framework Agenda was presented to the Conference at its meeting in May 1995. The process of finalizing the Framework Agenda led to the convening of a high-level expert group meeting which brought together over 40 senior experts from government, academia and the international community to contribute their insights and perspectives to the initiative.

155. The meeting of the panel constituted another step towards finalizing this Framework Agenda. The report of the panel is contained in document E/ECA/CM.22/CRP.3.

Adoption of the report (agenda item 11)

156. On 3 May 1996, the Committee adopted the present report together with the draft resolutions contained in the annex attached to this report for consideration by the Conference of Ministers. In view of the consensus that emerged during the deliberations that the MULPOCs should be strengthened, the Committee decided that a draft resolution on the MULPOCs should be presented directly to the Conference of Ministers.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 12)

157. In his closing remarks, the Executive Secretary expressed his deep and sincere gratitude to all the participants to the seventeenth meeting of TEPCOW for their strong support and encouragement. He stressed that this would serve as a source of inspiration to him in the task ahead to renew ECA to serve Africa better, and that he would always cherish a happy memory of this, the first TEPCOW meeting that he had attended. He expressed a special vote of thanks to the members of the Bureau, particularly the Chairman, for successfully conducting the proceedings.

158. The Chairman of TEPCOW also expressed gratitude to the Executive Secretary and the secretariat staff and to all the participants for their excellent cooperation during the meeting, and the hard work and dedication which they had demonstrated. He asserted that the recommendations which had been made would go a long way to promote the development of Africa. The Chairman also expressed gratitude to the interpreters, translators, sound technicians, and all who had made this TEPCOW a success.

159. He then declared the meeting closed.

Annex II

MEETINGS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES HELD DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW (4 MAY 1995 - 8 MAY 1996)

Body and officers	Meeting	Document symbol
Conference of African Ministers of Industry Chairman: Botswana Rapporteur: Cameroon	Twelfth meeting 6-8 June 1995 Gaborone, Botswana	CAMI.12/13
African Regional Conference on Science and Technology Chairman: Namibia Rapporteur: Tunisia	First meeting 6-10 November 1995 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	E/ECA/NRD/S&T/ARCST/1
Conference of African Ministers responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy Chairman: Ghana Rapporteur: Egypt	First meeting 20-23 November 1995 Accra, Ghana	ECA/NRD/DUMRE/MIN/6
Conference of African Ministers responsible for Trade, Regional Cooperation and Integration and Tourism Chairman: Ethiopia Rapporteur: Algeria	First meeting 14-16 February 1996 Addis Ababa	E/ECA/TRADE/96/1
Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment Chairman: Senegal Rapporteur: Malawi	First meeting 8-9 March 1996 Addis Ababa	E/ECA/CAMSDE/16
Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists Chairman: Zambia Rapporteur: Cameroon	Ninth meeting 11-16 March 1996 Addis Ababa	E/ECA/PSDI.9/24
Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) Chairperson: Nigeria Rapporteur: Uganda	Seventeenth meeting 24-26 April 1996 Addis Ababa	E/ECA/ACW/ARCC.XVII/96/8
Meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW) Chairman: Malawi Rapporteur: Algeria	Seventeenth meeting 30 April - 3 May 1996 Addis Ababa	E/ECA/CM.22/13

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title
E/ECA/TPCW.17/1	Provisional agenda
E/ECA/TPCW.17/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ECA/CM.22/1	Provisional agenda
E/ECA/CM.22/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ECA/CM.22/2	Serving Africa better: Strategic directions for ECA's future activities
E/ECA/CM.22/3	Medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001
E/ECA/CM.22/4	Report on the economic and social situation in Africa, 1996
E/ECA/CM.22/5	United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa
E/ECA/CM.22/6	Exploiting information technology to accelerate socio-economic development in Africa: An action plan
E/ECA/CM.22/6/Corr.1	Africa's Information Society Initiative (AISI): An action framework to build Africa's information and communication infrastructure
E/ECA/CM.22/7 E/ECA/CM.22/7/Add.1 E/ECA/CM.22/7/Add.2	Progress report on preparations and follow-up to international regional conferences and programmes
E/ECA/CM.22/8	Joint OAU/ECA progress report on the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community
E/ECA/CM.22/9	Biennial Report of the Executive Secretary, 1994-1995
E/ECA/CM.22/10	Progress report on programme evaluation (Biennium 1994-1995)
E/ECA/CM.22/10/Add.1	In-depth evaluation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa natural resources and energy subprogramme
E/ECA/CM.22/10/Add.2	Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF): Towards a more operational approach?
E/ECA/CM.22/11	Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies calling for action by the Conference of Ministers
E/ECA/CM.22/11/Add.1	Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies and ECA-sponsored institutions calling for action by the Conference of Ministers
E/ECA/CM.22/11/Add.2	Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies of the Commission calling for action by the Conference of Ministers: Report of the Executive Secretary on the consultations between the secretariats of AMCEN, OAU and UNEP with ECA concerning the scope of activities of AMCEN and CAMSDE
E/ECA/CM.22/11/Add.3	Issues from subsidiary organs and sectoral bodies and ECA-sponsored institutions calling for action by the Conference of Ministers
E/ECA/CM.22/12 E/ECA/CM.22/12/Summary	A Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa (a discussion draft)

Symbol	Title
E/ECA/CM.22/13	Report of the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole
E/ECA/CM.22/CRP.1	Follow-up on resolutions adopted by the thirtieth session of the Commissiuon/twenty-first meeting of the Conference of Ministers
E/ECA/CM.22/CRP.2	Resolutions and decisions in the economic and social sectors that are of interest to Africa adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995 and by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session
E/ECA/CM.22/CRP.3	Report of the panel discussion on a Framework Agenda for Building and Utilizing Critical Capacities in Africa held at the seventeenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole
E/ECA/CM.22/CRP.4	Report of the High-level Forum on public expenditure and the poor in Africa